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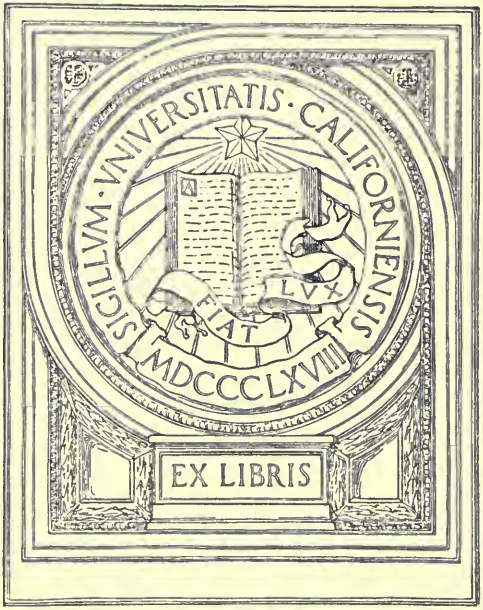

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THE

WORKS

OF

OSSIAN,

THE

SON of FINGAL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Tranſlated from the GALIC LANGUAGE

By JAMES MACPHERSON.

VOL. I. containing,

FINGAL, an Ancient EPIC POEM,

IN SIX BOOKS;

AND

SEVERAL OTHER POEMS.

Fortia factu patrum. VIRG.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

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Lately published,

Price Two Shillings,

THE SECOND EDITION,

A

CRITICAL DISSERTATION

ON THE

POEMS of OSSIAN,

THE

SON of FINGAL.

By HUGH BLAIR, D. D.

One of the Ministers of the High Church, and Professor of Rhetorick and Belles-Lettres, in the University of Edinburgh.

To which is added,

An APPENDIX, containing a variety of undoubted TESTIMONIES establishing their Authenticity.

TO THE

EARL of BUTE,

Knight of the moſt Noble Order of the Garter, &c. &c.

MY LORD,

I Preſume to preſent to your lordſhip a compleat edition of the Works of Oſſian. They have already been honored with your approbation, and have been received with applauſe by men of taſte throughout Europe. This addreſs therefore is not an endeavor to ſecure the continuance of the public favor through the ſanction of your name. Little ſolicitous myſelf about the reputation of an author, I permit, with no concern, the Old Bard to take his chance with the world: It proceeds, my Lord, from another cauſe; the ambition of being hereafter known to have met with your favor and protection in the execution of this work; an honor which will be envied me, perhaps, more ſome time hence

hence than at preſent. I throw no reflexions on this age, but there is a great debt of fame ówing to the EARL of BUTE, which hereafter will be amply paid: there is alſo ſome ſhare of reputation with-held from Oſſian, which leſs prejudiced times may beſtow. This ſimilarity between the Stateſman and the Poet, gives propriety to this dedication; though your Lordſhip's avowed patronage of literature requires no adventitious aid to direct to you the addreſſes of authors. It is with pleaſure I embrace this opportunity of teſtifying in public with what perfect attachment,

I am,

my Lord,

your Lordſhip's moſt humble,

moſt obliged,

and moſt obedient ſervant,

JAMES MACPHERSON.

A

DISSERTATION

CONCERNING THE

ANTIQUITY, &c. of the POEMS

OF

OSSIAN the Son of FINGAL.

INQUIRIES into the antiquities of nations afford more pleaſure than any real advantage to mankind. The ingenious may form ſyſtems of hiſtory on probabilities and a few facts; but at a great diſtance of time, their accounts muſt be vague and uncertain. The infancy of ſtates and kingdoms is as deſtitute of great events, as of the means of tranſmitting them to poſterity. The arts of poliſhed life, by which alone facts can be preſerved with certainty, are the production of a well-formed community. It is then hiſtorians begin to write, and public tranſactions to be worthy remembrance. The actions of former times are left in obſcurity, or magnified by uncertain traditions. Hence it is that we find ſo

much of the marvellous in the origin of every nation; poſterity being always ready to believe any thing, however fabulous, that reflects honour on their anceſtors. The Greeks and Romans were remarkable for this weakneſs. They ſwallowed the moſt abſurd fables concerning the high antiquities of their reſpective nations. Good hiſtorians, however, roſe very early amongſt them, and tranſmitted, with luſtre, their great actions to poſterity. It is to them that they owe that unrivalled fame they now enjoy, while the great actions of other nations are involved in fables, or loſt in obſcurity. The Celtic nations afford a ſtriking inſtance of this kind. They, though once the maſters of Europe from the mouth of the river Oby *, in Ruſſia, to Cape Finiſterre, the weſtern point of Gallicia in Spain, are very little mentioned in hiſtory. They truſted their fame to tradition and the ſongs of their bards, which, by the viciſſitude of human affairs, are long ſince loſt. Their ancient language is the only monument that remains of them; and the traces of it being found in places ſo widely diſtant from each other, ſerves only to ſhew the extent of their ancient power, but throws very little light on their hiſtory.

* Plin. l. 6.

OF all the Celtic nations, that which poſſeſſed old Gaul is the moſt renowned; not perhaps on account of worth ſuperior to the reſt, but for their wars with a people who had hiſtorians to tranſmit the fame of their enemies, as well as their own, to poſterity. Britain was firſt peopled by them, according to the teſtimony of the beſt authors *; its ſituation in reſpect to Gaul makes the opinion probable; but what puts it beyond all diſpute, is that the ſame cuſtoms and language prevailed among the inhabitants of both in the days of Julius Cæſar †.

THE colony from Gaul poſſeſſed themſelves, at firſt, of that part of Britain which was next to their own country; and ſpreading northward, by degrees, as they increaſed in numbers, peopled the whole iſland. Some adventurers paſſing over from thoſe parts of Britain that are within ſight of Ireland, were the founders of the Iriſh nation: which is a more probable ſtory than the idle fables of Mileſian and Gallician colonies. Diodorus Siculus ‡ mentions it as a thing well known in his time, that the inhabitants of Ireland were originally Britons; and his teſtimony is unqueſtionable, when we conſider

* Cæſ. l. 5. Tac. Agric. l. 1. c. 2. Pomp. Mel. Tacitus.

† Cæſar.

‡ Diod. Sic. l. 5.

that, for many ages, the language and cuſtoms of both nations were the ſame.

TACITUS was of opinion that the ancient Caledonians were of German extract. By the language and cuſtoms which always prevailed in the North of Scotland, and which are undoubtedly Celtic, one would be tempted to differ in opinion from that celebrated writer. The Germans, properly ſo called, were not the ſame with the ancient Celtæ. The manners and cuſtoms of the two nations were ſimilar; but their language different. The Germans * are the genuine deſcendants of the ancient Daæ, afterwards well known by the name of Daci, and paſſed originally into Europe by the way of the northern countries, and ſettled beyond the Danube, towards the vaſt regions of Tranſilvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia; and from thence advanced by degrees into Germany. The Celtæ †, it is certain, ſent many colonies into that country, all of whom retained their own laws, language, and cuſtoms; and it is of them, if any colonies came from Germany into Scotland, that the ancient Caledonians were deſcended.

BUT whether the Caledonians were a colony of the Celtic Germans, or the ſame with the Gauls

* Strabo, l. 7. † Cæſ. l. 6. Liv. l. 5. Tac. de mor. Germ.

tha

that firſt poſſeſſed themſelves of Britain, is a matter of no moment at this diſtance of time. Whatever their origin was, we find them very numerous in the time of Julius Agricola, which is a preſumption that they were long before ſettled in the country. The form of their government was a mixture of ariſtocracy and monarchy, as it was in all the countries where the Druids bore the chief ſway. This order of men ſeems to have been formed on the ſame ſyſtem with the Dactyli Idæi and Curetes of the ancients. Their pretended intercourſe with heaven, their magic and divination were the ſame. The knowledge of the Druids in natural cauſes, and the properties of certain things, the fruit of the experiments of ages, gained them a mighty reputation among the people. The eſteem of the populace ſoon increaſed into a veneration for the order; which a cunning and ambitious tribe of men took care to improve, to ſuch a degree, that they, in a manner, ingroſſed the management of civil, as well as religious, matters. It is generally allowed that they did not abuſe this extraordinary power; the preſerving their character of ſanctity was ſo eſſential to their influence, that they never broke out into violence or oppreſſion. The chiefs were allowed to execute the laws, but the legiſlative power was entirely

tirely in the hands of the Druids *. It was by their authority that the tribes were united, in times of the greateſt danger, under one head. This temporary king, or Vergobretus †, was choſen by them, and generally laid down his office at the end of the war. Theſe prieſts enjoyed long this extraordinary privilege among the Celtic nations who lay beyond the pale of the Roman empire. It was in the beginning of the ſecond century that their power among the Caledonians begun to decline. The poems that celebrate Trathal and Cormac, anceſtors to Fingal, are full of particulars concerning the fall of the Druids, which account for the total ſilence concerning their religion in the poems that are now given to the public.

THE continual wars of the Caledonians againſt the Romans hindered the nobility from initiating themſelves, as the cuſtom formerly was, into the order of the Druids. The precepts of their religion were confined to a few, and were not much attended to by a people inured to war. The Vergobretus, or chief magiſtrate, was choſen without the concurrence of the hierarchy, or continued in his office againſt their will. Continual power ſtrengthened his intereſt among

* Cæſ. l. 6. † Fer-gubreth, *the man to judge.*

the

the tribes, and enabled him to ſend down, as hereditary to his poſterity, the office he had only received himſelf by election.

ON occaſion of a new war againſt the *King of the World*, as the poems emphatically call the Roman emperor, the Druids, to vindicate the honour of the order, began to reſume their ancient privilege of chuſing the Vergobretus. Garmal, the ſon of Tarno, being deputed by them, came to the grandfather of the celebrated Fingal, who was then Vergobretus, and commanded him, in the name of the whole order, to lay down his office. Upon his refuſal, a civil war commenced, which ſoon ended in almoſt the total extinction of the religious order of the Druids. A few that remained, retired to the dark receſſes of their groves, and the caves they had formerly uſed for their meditations. It is then we find them in *the circle of ſtones*, and unheeded by the world. A total diſregard for the order, and utter abhorrence of the Druidical rites enſued. Under this cloud of public hate, all that had any knowledge of the religion of the Druids became extinct, and the nation fell into the laſt degree of ignorance of their rites and ceremonies.

IT is no matter of wonder then, that Fingal and his ſon Oſſian make ſo little, if any, men-

tion of the Druids, who were the declared enemies to their ſucceſſion in the ſupreme magiſtracy. It is a ſingular caſe, it muſt be allowed, that there are no traces of religion in the poems aſcribed to Oſſian; as the poetical compoſitions of other nations are ſo cloſely connected with their mythology. It is hard to account for it to thoſe who are not made acquainted with the manner of the old Scottiſh bards. That race of men carried their notions of martial honour to an extravagant pitch. Any aid given their heroes in battle, was thought to derogate from their fame; and the bards immediately tranſferred the glory of the action to him who had given that aid.

Had Oſſian brought down gods, as often as Homer hath done, to aſſiſt his heroes, this poem had not conſiſted of eulogiums on his friends, but of hymns to theſe ſuperior beings. To this day, thoſe that write in the Galic language ſeldom mention religion in their profane poetry; and when they profeſſedly write of religion, they never interlard with their compoſitions, the actions of their heroes. This cuſtom alone, even though the religion of the Druids had not been previouſly extinguiſhed, may, in ſome meaſure, account for Oſſian's ſilence concerning the religion of his own times.

To

To ſay, that a nation is void of all religion, is the ſame thing as to ſay, that it does not conſiſt of people endued with reaſon. The traditions of their fathers, and their own obſervations on the works of nature, together with that ſuperſtition which is inherent in the human frame, have, in all ages, raiſed in the minds of men ſome idea of a ſuperior being.---Hence it is, that in the darkeſt times, and amongſt the moſt barbarous nations, the very populace themſelves had ſome faint notion, at leaſt, of a divinity. It would be doing injuſtice to Oſſian, who, upon no occaſion, ſhews a narrow mind, to think, that he had not opened his conceptions to that primitive and greateſt of all truths. But let Oſſian's religion be what it will, it is certain he had no knowledge of Chriſtianity, as there is not the leaſt alluſion to it, or any of its rites, in his poems; which abſolutely fixes him to an æra prior to the introduction of that religion. The perſecution begun by Diocleſian, in the year 303, is the moſt probable time in which the firſt dawning of Chriſtianity in the north of Britain can be fixed.---The humane and mild character of Conſtantius Chlorus, who commanded then in Britain, induced the perſecuted Chriſtians to take refuge under him. Some of them, through a zeal to propagate their tenets, or through fear,

went beyond the pale of the Roman empire, and ſettled among the Caledonians; who were the more ready to hearken to their doctrines, as the religion of the Druids had been exploded ſo long before.

THESE miſſionaries, either through choice, or to give more weight to the doctrine they advanced, took poſſeſſion of the cells and groves of the Druids; and it was from this retired life they had the name of *Culdees* *, which in the language of the country ſignified *ſequeſtered perſons*. It was with one of the *Culdees* that Oſſian, in his extreme old age, is ſaid to have diſputed concerning the Chriſtian religion. This diſpute is ſtill extant, and is couched in verſe, according to the cuſtom of the times. The extreme ignorance on the part of Oſſian, of the Chriſtian tenets, ſhews, that that religion had only been lately introduced, as it is not eaſy to conceive, how one of the firſt rank could be totally unacquainted with a religion that had been known for any time in the country. The diſpute bears the genuine marks of antiquity. The obſolete phraſes and expreſſions peculiar to the times, prove it to be no forgery. If Oſſian then lived at the introduction of Chriſtianity, as by all ap-

* Culdich.

pearance

pearance he did, his epoch will be the latter end of the third, and beginning of the fourth century. What puts this point beyond diſpute, is the alluſion in his poems to the hiſtory of the times.

THE exploits of Fingal againſt Caracul*, the ſon of the *King of the World*, are among the firſt brave actions of his youth. A complete poem, which relates to this ſubject, is printed in this collection.

IN the year 210 the emperor Severus, after returning from his expeditions againſt the Caledonians, at York fell into the tedious illneſs of which he afterwards died. The Caledonians and Maiatæ, reſuming courage from his indiſpoſition, took arms in order to recover the poſſeſſions they had loſt. The enraged emperor commanded his army to march into their country, and to deſtroy it with fire and ſword. His orders were but ill executed, for his ſon, Caracalla, was at the head of the army, and his thoughts were entirely taken up with the hopes of his father's death, and with ſchemes to ſupplant his brother Geta.---He ſcarcely had entered the enemy's country, when news was

* Carac'huil, *terrible eye*. Carac-'healla, *terrible look*. Caracchallamh, *a ſort of upper garment*.

brought

brought him that Severus was dead.---A ſudden peace is patched up with the Caledonians, and, as it appears from Dion Caſſius, the country they had loſt to Severus was reſtored to them.

THE Caracul of Fingal is no other than Caracalla, who, as the ſon of Severus, the Emperor of Rome, whoſe dominions were extended almoſt over the known world, was not without reaſon called in the poems of Oſſian, *the Son of the King of the World.* The ſpace of time between 211, the year Severus died, and the beginning of the fourth century, is not ſo great, but Oſſian the ſon of Fingal, might have ſeen the Chriſtians whom the perſecution under Diocleſian had driven beyond the pale of the Roman empire.

OSSIAN, in one of his many lamentations on the death of his beloved ſon Oſcar, mentions among his great actions, a battle which he fought againſt Caros, king of ſhips, on the banks of the winding Carun *. It is more than probable, that the Caros mentioned here, is the ſame with the noted uſurper Carauſius, who aſſumed the purple in the year 287, and ſeizing on Britain, defeated the emperor Maximian Herculius, in ſeveral naval engagements, which gives pro-

* Car-avon, *Winding river.*

priety

priety to his being called in Offian's poems, *the King of Ships*. The *winding Carun* is that ſmall river retaining ſtill the name of Carron, and runs in the neighbourhood of Agricola's wall, which Carauſius repaired to obſtruct the incurſions of the Caledonians. Several other paſſages in the poems allude to the wars of the Romans; but the two juſt mentioned clearly fix the epoch of Fingal to the third century; and this account agrees exactly with the Iriſh hiſtories, which place the death of Fingal, the ſon of Comhal, in the year 283, and that of Oſcar and their own celebrated Cairbre, in the year 296.

SOME people may imagine, that the alluſions to the Roman hiſtory might have been induſtriouſly inſerted into the poems, to give them the appearance of antiquity. This fraud muſt then have been committed at leaſt three ages ago, as the paſſages in which the alluſions are made, are alluded to often in the compoſitions of thoſe times.

EVERY one knows what a cloud of ignorance and barbariſm overſpread the north of Europe three hundred years ago. The minds of men, addicted to ſuperſtition, contracted a narrowneſs that deſtroyed genius. Accordingly we find the compoſitions of thoſe times trivial and puerile to the laſt degree. But let it be allowed, that,

amidſt all the untoward circumſtances of the age, a genius might ariſe, it is not eaſy to determine what could induce him to give the honour of his compoſitions to an age ſo remote. We find no fact that he has advanced, to favour any deſigns which could be entertained by any man who lived in the fifteenth century. But ſhould we ſuppoſe a poet, through humour, or for reaſons which cannot be ſeen at this diſtance of time, would aſcribe his own compoſitions to Oſſian, it is next to impoſſible, that he could impoſe upon his countrymen, when all of them were ſo well acquainted with the traditional poems of their anceſtors.

THE ſtrongeſt objection to the authenticity of the poems now given to the public under the name of Oſſian, is the improbability of their being handed down by tradition through ſo many centuries. Ages of barbariſm ſome will ſay, could not produce poems abounding with the diſintereſted and generous ſentiments ſo conſpicuous in the compoſitions of Oſſian; and could theſe ages produce them, it is impoſſible but they muſt be loſt, or altogether corrupted in a long ſucceſſion of barbarous generations.

THESE objections naturally ſuggeſt themſelves to men unacquainted with the ancient ſtate of the northern parts of Britain. The bards, who were

were an inferior order of the Druids, did not ſhare their bad fortune. They were ſpared by the victorious king, as it was through their means only he could hope for immortality to his fame. They attended him in the camp, and contributed to eſtabliſh his power by their ſongs. His great actions were magnified, and the populace, who had no ability to examine into his character narrowly, were dazzled with his fame in the rhimes of the bards. In the mean time, men aſſumed ſentiments that are rarely to be met with in an age of barbariſm. The bards who were originally the diſciples of the Druids, had their minds opened, and their ideas enlarged, by being initiated in the learning of that celebrated order. They could form a perfect hero in their own minds, and aſcribe that character to their prince. The inferior chiefs made this ideal character the model of their conduct, and by degrees brought their minds to that generous ſpirit which breathes in all the poetry of the times. The prince, flattered by his bards, and rivalled by his own heroes, who imitated his character as deſcribed in the eulogies of his poets, endeavoured to excel his people in merit, as he was above them in ſtation. This emulation continuing, formed at laſt the general character of the nation, happily compounded of

what is noble in barbarity, and virtuous and generous in a poliſhed people.

When virtue in peace, and bravery in war, are the characteriſtics of a nation, their actions become intereſting, and their fame worthy of immortality. A generous ſpirit is warmed with noble actions, and becomes ambitious of perpetuating them. This is the true ſource of that divine inſpiration, to which the poets of all ages pretended. When they found their themes inadequate to the warmth of their imaginations, they varniſhed them over with fables, ſupplied by their own fancy, or furniſhed by abſurd traditions. Theſe fables, however ridiculous, had their abettors; poſterity either implicitly believed them, or through a vanity natural to mankind, pretended that they did. They loved to place the founders of their families in the days of fable, when poetry, without the fear of contradiction, could give what characters ſhe pleaſed of her heroes. It is to this vanity that we owe the preſervation of what remain of the works of Oſſian. His poetical merit made his heroes famous in a country where heroiſm was much eſteemed and admired. The poſterity of theſe heroes, or thoſe who pretended to be deſcended from them, heard with pleaſure the eulogiums of their anceſtors; bards were employed to repeat

peat the poems, and to record the connection of their patrons with chiefs so renowned. Every chief in process of time had a bard in his family, and the office became at last hereditary. By the succession of these bards, the poems concerning the ancestors of the family were handed down from generation to generation; they were repeated to the whole clan on solemn occasions, and always alluded to in the new compositions of the bards. This custom came down near to our own times; and after the bards were discontinued, a great number in a clan retained by memory, or committed to writing, their compositions, and founded the antiquity of their families on the authority of their poems.

THE use of letters was not known in the north of Europe till long after the institution of the bards: the records of the families of their patrons, their own, and more ancient poems were handed down by tradition. Their poetical compositions were admirably contrived for that purpose. They were adapted to music; and the most perfect harmony was observed. Each verse was so connected with those which preceded or followed it, that if one line had been remembered in a stanza, it was almost impossible to forget the rest. The cadences followed in so natural a gradation, and the words were so adapted

to the common turn of the voice, after it is raiſed to a certain key, that it was almoſt impoſſible, from a ſimilarity of ſound, to ſubſtitute one word for another. This excellence is peculiar to the Celtic tongue, and is perhaps to be met with in no other language. Nor does this choice of words clog the ſenſe or weaken the expreſſion. The numerous flections of conſonants, and variation in declenſion, make the language very copious.

THE deſcendants of the Celtæ, who inhabited Britain and its iſles, were not ſingular in this method of preſerving the moſt precious monuments of their nation. The ancient laws of the Greeks were couched in verſe, and handed down by tradition. The Spartans, through a long habit, became ſo fond of this cuſtom, that they would never allow their laws to be committed to writing. The actions of great men, and the eulogiums of kings and heroes, were preſerved in the ſame manner. All the hiſtorical monuments of the old Germans were comprehended in their ancient ſongs *; which were either hymns to their gods, or elegies in praiſe of their heroes, and were intended to perpetuate the great events in their nation which were carefully interwoven with

* Tacitus de mor. Germ.

them

them. This ſpecies of compoſition was not committed to writing, but delivered by oral tradition *. The care they took to have the poems taught to their children, the uninterrupted cuſtom of repeating them upon certain occaſions, and the happy meaſure of the verſe, ſerved to preſerve them for a long time uncorrupted. This oral chronicle of the Germans was not forgot in the eighth century, and it probably would have remained to this day, had not learning, which thinks every thing, that is not committed to writing, fabulous, been introduced. It was from poetical traditions that Garcillaſſo compoſed his account of the Yncas of Peru. The Peruvians had loſt all other monuments of their hiſtory, and it was from ancient poems which his mother, a princeſs of the blood of the Yncas, taught him in his youth, that he collected the materials of his hiſtory. If other nations then, that had been often overun by enemies, and had ſent abroad and received colonies, could, for many ages, preſerve, by oral tradition, their laws and hiſtories uncorrupted, it is much more probable that the ancient Scots, a people ſo free of intermixture with foreigners, and ſo ſtrongly attached to the

* *Abbé de la Bleterie Remarques ſur la Germanie.*

memory of their anceſtors, had the works of their bards handed down with great purity.

It will ſeem ſtrange to ſome, that poems admired for many centuries in one part of this kingdom ſhould be hitherto unknown in the other; and that the Britiſh, who have carefully traced out the works of genius in other nations, ſhould ſo long remain ſtrangers to their own. This, in a great meaſure, is to be imputed to thoſe who underſtood both languages and never attempted a tranſlation. They, from being acquainted but with detached pieces, or from a modeſty, which perhaps the preſent tranſlator ought, in prudence, to have followed, deſpaired of making the compoſitions of their bards agreeable to an Engliſh reader. The manner of thoſe compoſitions is ſo different from other poems, and the ideas ſo confined to the moſt early ſtate of ſociety, that it was thought they had not enough of variety to pleaſe a poliſhed age.

This was long the opinion of the tranſlator of the following collection; and though he admired the poems, in the original, very early, and gathered part of them from tradition for his own amuſement, yet he never had the ſmalleſt hopes of ſeeing them in an Engliſh dreſs. He was ſenſible that the ſtrength and manner of both languages were very different, and that it

was next to impoſſible to tranſlate the Galic poetry into any thing of tolerable Engliſh verſe; a proſe tranſlation he could never think of, as it muſt neceſſarily fall ſhort of the majeſty of an original.

IT is therefore highly probable, that the compoſitions of Oſſian would have ſtill remained in the obſcurity of a loſt language, had not a gentleman, who has himſelf made a figure in the poetical world, inſiſted with the preſent editor for a literal proſe tranſlation of ſome detached piece. He approved of the ſpecimen, and, through him, copies came to the hands of ſeveral people of taſte in Scotland.

FREQUENT tranſcription and the corrections of thoſe, who thought they mended the poems by modernizing the ideas, corrupted them to ſuch a degree, that the tranſlator was induced to hearken to the ſolicitations of a gentleman deſervedly eſteemed in Scotland, for his taſte and knowledge in polite literature, and publiſhed the genuine copies under the title of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*. The fragments, upon their firſt appearance, were ſo much approved of, that ſeveral people of rank, as well as taſte, prevailed with the tranſlator to make a journey to the Highlands and weſtern iſles, in order to recover what remained of the works of

Oſſian

Oſſian he ſon of Fingal, the beſt, as well as moſt ancient of thoſe who are celebrated in tradition for their poetical genius. A detail of this journey would be both tedious and unentertaining; let it ſuffice therefore that, after a peregrination of ſix months, the tranſlator collected from tradition, and ſome manuſcripts, all the poems in the following collection, and ſome more ſtill in his hands, though rendered leſs complete by the ravages of time.

THE action of the poem that ſtands the firſt, was not the greateſt or moſt celebrated of the exploits of Fingal. His wars were very numerous, and each of them afforded a theme which employed the genius of his ſon. But, excepting the preſent poem, thoſe pieces are in a great meaſure loſt, and there only remain a few fragments of them in the hands of the tranſlator. Tradition has ſtill preſerved, in many places, the ſtory of the poems, and many now living have heard them, in their youth, repeated.

THE complete work, now printed, would, in a ſhort time, have ſhared the fate of the reſt. The genius of the highlanders has ſuffered a great change within theſe few years. The communication with the reſt of the iſland is open, and the introduction of trade and manufactures has deſtroyed that leiſure which was formerly

dedicated

dedicated to hearing and repeating the poems of ancient times. Many have now learned to leave their mountains, and ſeek their fortunes in a milder climate; and though a certain *amor patriæ* may ſometimes bring them back, they have, during their abſence, imbibed enough of foreign manners to deſpiſe the cuſtoms of their anceſtors. Bards have been long diſuſed, and the ſpirit of genealogy has greatly ſubſided. Men begin to be leſs devoted to their chiefs, and conſanguinity is not ſo much regarded. When property is eſtabliſhed, the human mind confines its views to the pleaſure it procures. It does not go back to antiquity, or look forward to ſucceeding ages. The cares of life increaſe, and the actions of other times no longer amuſe. Hence it is, that the taſte for their ancient poetry is at a low ebb among the highlanders. They have not, however, thrown off the good qualities of their anceſtors. Hoſpitality ſtill ſubſiſts, and an uncommon civility to ſtrangers. Friendſhip is inviolable, and revenge leſs blindly followed than formerly.

To ſpeak of the poetical merit of the poems, would be an anticipation on the judgment of the public: And all that can be ſaid of the tranſlation, is, that it is literal, and that ſimplicity is ſtudied. The arrangement of the words in the original

original is imitated, and the inverſions of the ſtyle obſerved. As the tranſlator claims no merit from his verſion, he hopes for the indulgence of the public where he fails. He wiſhes that the imperfect ſemblance he draws, may not prejudice the world againſt an original, which contains what is beautiful in ſimplicity, and grand in the ſublime.

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FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

ARGUMENT to Book I.

Cuchullin, (general of the Iriſh tribes, in the minority of Cormac, king of Ireland) ſitting alone beneath a tree, at the gate of Tura, a caſtle of Ulſter, (the other chiefs having gone on a hunting party to Cromla, a neighbouring hill) is informed of the landing of Swaran, king of Lochlin, by Moran, the ſon of Fithil, one of his ſcouts. He convenes the chiefs; a council is held, and diſputes run high about giving battle to the enemy. Connal, the petty king of Togorma, and an intimate friend of Cuchullin, was for retreating till Fingal, king of thoſe Caledonians who inhabited the north-weſt coaſt of Scotland, whoſe aid had been previouſly ſollicited, ſhould arrive; but Calmar, the ſon of Matha, lord of Lara, a country in Connaught, was for engaging the enemy immediately.—Cuchullin, of himſelf willing to fight, went into the opinion of Calmar. Marching towards the enemy, he miſſed three of his braveſt heroes, Fergus, Duchomar, and Caithbat. Fergus arriving, tells Cuchullin of the death of the two other chiefs; which introduces the affecting epiſode of Morna, the daughter of Cormac—The army of Cuchullin is deſcried at a diſtance by Swaran, who ſent the ſon of Arno to obſerve the motions of the enemy, while he himſelf ranged his forces in order of battle.—— The ſon of Arno returning to Swaran, deſcribes to him Cuchullin's chariot, and the terrible appearance of that hero. The armies engage, but night coming on, leaves the victory undecided. Cuchullin, according to the hoſpitality of the times, ſends to Swaran a formal invitation to a feaſt, by his bard Carril, the ſon of Kinſena.—Swaran refuſes to come. Carril relates to Cuchullin the ſtory of Grudar and Braſſolis. A party, by Connal's advice, is ſent to obſerve the enemy; which cloſes the action of the firſt day.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CUCHULLIN * ſat by Tura's wall; by the tree of the ruſtling leaf.-----His ſpear leaned againſt the moſſy rock. His ſhield lay

* Cuchullin, or rather Cuth-Ullin, *the voice of Ullin*, a poetical name given the ſon of Semo by the bards, from his commanding the forces of the Province of Ulſter againſt the Ferbolg or Belgæ, who were in poſſeſſion of Connaught. Cuchullin when very young married Bragela the daughter of Sorglan, and paſſing over into Ireland, lived for ſome time with Connal, grandſon by a daughter to Congal the petty king of Ulſter. His wiſdom and valour in a ſhort time gained him ſuch reputation, that in the minority of Cormac the ſupreme king of Ireland, he was choſen guardian to the young king, and ſole manager of the war againſt Swaran king of Lochlin. After a ſeries of great actions he was killed in battle ſomewhere in Connaught, in the twenty-ſeventh year of his age. He was ſo remarkable for his ſtrength, that to deſcribe a ſtrong man it has paſſed into a proverb, "He has the ſtrength of Cuchullin." They ſhew the remains of his palace at Dunſcaich in the Iſle of Skye; and a ſtone to which he bound his dog Luath, goes ſtill by his name.

by him on the grafs. As he thought of mighty Carbar †, a hero whom he flew in war; the fcout § of the ocean came, Moran ‡ the fon of Fithil.

Rise, faid the youth, Cuchullin, rife; I fee the fhips of Swaran. Cuchullin, many are the foe: many the heroes of the dark-rolling fea.

Moran! replied the blue-eyed chief, thou ever trembleft, fon of Fithil: Thy fears have much increafed the foe. Perhaps it is the king || of the lonely hills coming to aid me on green Ullin's plains.

† Cairbar or Cairbre fignifies a ftrong man.

§ We may conclude from Cuchullin's applying fo early for foreign aid, that the Iriſh were not then fo numerous as they have fince been; which is a great preſumption againſt the high antiquities of that people. We have the teſtimony of Tacitus that one legion only was thought ſufficient, in the time of Agricola, to reduce the whole iſland under the Roman yoke; which would not probably have been the caſe had the iſland been inhabited for any number of centuries before.

‡ Moran fignifies many; and Fithil, or rather Fili, *an inferior bard.*

|| Fingal the fon of Comhal, and Morna the daughter of Thaddu. His grandfather was Trathal, and great grandfather Trenmor, both of whom are often mentioned in the poem.—Trenmor, according to tradition, had two fons; Trathal, who ſucceeded him in the Kingdom of Morven, and Conar, called by the bards *Conar the great*, who was elected king of all Ireland, and was the anceſtor of that Cormac who ſat on the Iriſh throne when the invaſion of Swaran happened. It may not be improper here to obſerve, that the accent ought always to be placed on the laſt ſyllable of Fingal.

I saw their chief, says Moran, tall as a rock of ice. His spear is like that blasted fir. His shield like the rising moon. He sat on a rock on the shore: his dark host rolled, like clouds, around him.----Many, chief of men! I said, many are our hands of war.---Well art thou named, the Mighty Man, but many mighty men are seen from Tura's windy walls.----He answered, like a wave on a rock, who in this land appears like me? Heroes stand not in my presence: they fall to earth beneath my hand. None can meet Swaran in the fight but Fingal, king of stormy hills. Once we wrestled on the heath of Malmor *, and our heels overturned the wood. Rocks fell from their place; and rivulets, changing their course, fled murmuring from our strife. Three days we renewed our strife, and heroes stood at a distance and trembled. On the fourth, Fingal says, that the king of the ocean fell; but Swaran says, he stood. Let dark Cuchullin yield to him that is strong as the storms of Malmor.

No: replied the blue-eyed chief, I will never yield to man. Dark Cuchullin will be great or dead. Go, Fithil's son, and take my spear:

* Meal-mór—*a great hill.*

ſtrike the ſounding ſhield of Cabait ||. It hangs at Tura's ruſtling gate; the ſound of peace is not its voice. My heroes ſhall hear on the hill.

He went and ſtruck the boſſy ſhield. The hills and their rocks replied. The ſound ſpread along the wood: deer ſtart by the lake of roes. Curach * leapt from the ſounding rock; and Connal of the bloody ſpear. Crugal's † breaſt of ſnow beats high. The ſon of Favi leaves the dark-brown hind. It is the ſhield of war, ſaid Ronnar, the ſpear of Cuchullin, ſaid Lugar.-----Son of the ſea, put on thy arms! Calmar lift thy ſounding ſteel! Puno! horrid hero, riſe: Cairbar from thy red tree of Cromla. Bend thy white knee, O Eth; and deſcend from the ſtreams of Lena.——Ca-olt ſtretch thy white ſide as thou moveſt along the whiſtling heath of Mora: thy ſide that is white as the foam of the troubled ſea, when the dark winds pour it on the murmuring rocks of Cuthon ‡.

|| Cabait, or rather Cathbait, grandfather to the hero, was ſo remarkable for his valour, that his ſhield was made uſe of to alarm his poſterity to the battles of the family. We find Fingal making the ſame uſe of his own ſhield in the 4th book.——A horn was the moſt common inſtrument to call the army together before the invention of bagpipes.

* Cu-raoch ſignifies *the m dneſs of battle.*

† Cruth-geal——*fair-complexioned.*

‡ Cu-thón—*the mouruful ſound of waves.*

Now

Now I behold the chiefs in the pride of their former deeds; their ſouls are kindled at the battles of old, and the actions of other times. Their eyes are like flames of fire, and roll in ſearch of the foes of the land.——Their mighty hands are on their ſwords; and lightning pours from their ſides of ſteel.——They came like ſtreams from the mountains; each ruſhed roaring from his hill. Bright are the chiefs of battle in the armour of their fathers.——Gloomy and dark their heroes followed, like the gathering of the rainy clouds behind the red meteors of heaven.——The ſounds of craſhing arms aſcend. The grey dogs howl between. Unequally burſts the ſong of battle; and rocking Cromla * echoes round. On Lena's duſky heath they ſtood, like miſt † that ſhades the hills of autumn: when broken and dark it ſettles high, and lifts its head to heaven.

* Crom-leach ſignified a place of worſhip among the Druids. It is here the proper name of a hill on the coaſt of Ullin or Ulſter.

† ——νεφέλῃσιν ἐοικότες ἄΐτε Κρονίων
Νηνεμίης, ἔστησεν ἐπ' ἀκροπολοισιν ὄρεσσιν
Ατρέμας. Hom. Il. 5. v. 522.

So when th' embattled clouds in dark array,
Along the ſkies their gloomy lines diſplay;
The low-hung vapours motionleſs and ſtill
Reſt on the ſummits of the ſhaded hill. Pope.

HAIL, ſaid Cuchullin, ſons of the narrow vales, hail ye hunters of the deer. Another ſport is drawing near: it is like the dark rolling of that wave on the coaſt. Shall we fight, ye ſons of war! or yield green Innisfail ‡ to Lochlin?——O Connal || ſpeak, thou firſt of men! thou breaker of the ſhields! thou haſt often fought with Lochlin; wilt thou lift thy father's ſpear?

CUCHULLIN! calm the chief replied, the ſpear of Connal is keen. It delights to ſhine in battle, and to mix with the blood of thouſands. But tho' my hand is bent on war, my heart is for the peace of Erin *. Behold, thou firſt in Cormac's war, the ſable fleet of Swaran. His maſts are as numerous on our coaſt as reeds in

‡ Ireland ſo called from a colony that ſettled there called Falans.—Innis-fail, *i. e.* the iſland of the Fa-il or Falans.

|| Connal, the friend of Cuchullin, was the ſon of Cathbait prince of Tongorma or the *iſland of blue waves*, probably one of the Hebrides. His mother was Fioncoma the daughter of Congal. He had a ſon by Foba of Conachar-neſſar, who was afterwards king of Ulſter. For his ſervices in the war againſt Swaran he had lands conferred on him, which, from his name, were called Tir-chonnuil or Tir-connel, *i. e.* the land of Connal.

* Erin, a name of Ireland; from *ear* or *iar* Weſt, and *in* an iſland. This name was not always confined to Ireland, for there is the higheſt probability that the *Ierne* of the ancients was Britain to the North of the Forth.—For Ierne is ſaid to be to the North of Britain, which could not be meant of Ireland.

STRABO, l. 2. & 4. CASAUB. l. 1.

the

the lake of Lego. His ſhips are like foreſts cloathed with miſt, when the trees yield by turns to the ſqually wind. Many are his chiefs in battle. Connal is for peace.——Fingal would ſhun his arm the firſt of mortal men: Fingal that ſcatters the mighty, as ſtormy winds the heath; when the ſtreams roar thro' echoing Cona: and night ſettles with all her clouds on the hill.

FLY, thou chief of peace, ſaid Calmar †, the ſon of Matha; fly, Connal, to thy ſilent hills, where the ſpear of battle never ſhone; purſue the dark-brown deer of Cromla: and ſtop with thine arrows the bounding roes of Lena. But, blue-eyed ſon of Semo, Cuchullin, ruler of the war, ſcatter thou the ſons of Loch-lin ‡, and roar thro' the ranks of their pride. Let no veſſel of the kingdom of Snow bound on the dark-rolling waves of Inis-tore ||. O ye dark winds of Erin riſe! roar ye whirlwinds of the heath! Amidſt the tempeſt let me die, torn in a cloud by angry ghoſts of men; amidſt the tempeſt let Calmar die, if ever chace was ſport to him ſo much as the battle of ſhields.

† Cálm-er, *a ſtrong man.*

‡ The Galic name of Scandinavia in general; in a more confined ſenſe that of the peninſula of Jutland.

|| Innis-tore, *the iſland of whales*, the ancient name of the Orkney iſlands.

CALMAR!

Calmar! ſlow replied the chief, I never fled, O Matha's ſon. I was ſwift with my friends in battle, but ſmall is the fame of Connal. The battle was won in my preſence, and the valiant overcame. But, ſon of Semo, hear my voice, regard the ancient throne of Cormac. Give wealth and half the land for peace, till Fingal come with battle. Or, if war be thy choice, I lift the ſword and ſpear. My joy ſhall be in the midſt of thouſands, and my ſoul brighten in the gloom of the fight.

To me, Cuchullin replies, pleaſant is the noiſe of arms: pleaſant as the thunder of heaven before the ſhower of Spring. But gather all the ſhining tribes that I may view the ſons of war. Let them move along the heath, bright as the ſun-ſhine before a ſtorm; when the weſt wind collects the clouds, and the oaks of Morven echo along the ſhore.

But where are my friends in battle? The companions of my arm in danger? Where art thou, white-boſom'd Cathbat? Where is that cloud in war, Duchomar *? and haſt thou left me, O Fergus †! in the day of the ſtorm? Fergus, firſt in our joy at the feaſt! ſon of

* Dubhchomar, *a black well-ſhaped man.*

† Fear-guth,—*the man of the word*; or a commander of an army.

Roſſa!

Roſſa! arm of death! comeſt thou like a roe ‡ from Malmor? Like a hart from the ecchoing hills?——Hail thou ſon of Roſſa! what ſhades the ſoul of war?

FOUR ſtones ||, replied the chief, riſe on the grave of Cathbat.——Theſe hands have laid in earth Duchomar, that cloud in war. Cathbat, thou ſon of Torman, thou wert a ſun-beam on the hill.——And thou, O valiant Duchomar, like the miſt of marſhy Lano; when it fails over the plains of autumn and brings death to the people. Morna, thou faireſt of maids! calm is thy ſleep in the cave of the rock. Thou haſt fallen in darkneſs like a ſtar, that ſhoots athwart the deſart, when the traveller is alone, and mourns the tranſient beam.

Say, ſaid Semo's blue-eyed ſon, ſay how fell the chiefs of Erin? Fell they by the ſons of

‡ Be thou like a roe or young hart on the mountains of Bether. SOLOMON'S Song.

|| This paſſage alludes to the manner of burial among the ancient Scots. They opened a grave ſix or eight feet deep: the bottom was lined with fine clay; and on this they laid the body of the deceaſed, and, if a warrior, his ſword, and the heads of twelve arrows by his ſide. Above they laid another ſtratum of clay, in which they placed the horn of a deer, the ſymbol of hunting. The whole was covered with a fine mold, and four ſtones placed on end to mark the extent of the grave. Theſe are the four ſtones alluded to here.

Lochlin,

Lochlin, ſtriving in the battle of heroes? Or what confines the chiefs of Cromla to the dark and narrow houſe *?

CATHBAT, replied the hero, fell by the ſword of Duchomar at the oak of the noiſy ſtreams. Duchomar came to Tura's cave, and ſpoke to the lovely Morna.

MORNA †, faireſt among women, lovely daughter of Cormac-cairbar. Why in the circle of ſtones; in the cave of the rock alone? The ſtream murmurs hoarſely. The old tree's groan is in the wind. The lake is troubled before thee, and dark are the clouds of the ſky. But thou art like ſnow on the heath; and thy hair like the miſt of Cromla; when it curls on the rocks, and ſhines to the beam of the weſt.—— Thy breaſts are like two ſmooth rocks ſeen from Branno of the ſtreams. Thy arms like two white pillars in the halls of the mighty Fingal.

FROM whence, the white-armed maid replied, from whence, Duchomar the moſt gloomy of men? Dark are thy brows and terrible. Red are thy rolling eyes. Does Swaran appear on the ſea? What of the foe, Duchomar?

FROM the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the dark-brown hinds. Three have I

* The grave.——The houſe appointed for all living. JOE.
† Muirne or Morna, *a woman beloved by all.*

ſlain

ſlain with my bended yew. Three with my long bounding dogs of the chace.——Lovely daughter of Cormac, I love thee as my ſoul. ——I have ſlain one ſtately deer for thee.—— High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind.

Duchomar! calm the maid replied, I love thee not, thou gloomy man.——Hard is thy heart of rock, and dark thy terrible brow. But Cathbat, thou ſon of Torman *, thou art the love of Morna. Thou art like a ſun-beam on the hill in the day of the gloomy ſtorm. Saweſt thou the ſon of Torman, lovely on the hill of his hinds? Here the daughter of Cormac waits the coming of Cathbat.

And long ſhall Morna wait, Duchomar ſaid, his blood is on my ſword.——Long ſhall Morna wait for him. He fell at Branno's ſtream. High on Cromla I will raiſe his tomb, daughter of Cormac-cairbar; but fix thy love on Duchomar, his arm is ſtrong as a ſtorm.——

And is the ſon of Torman fallen? ſaid the maid of the tearful eye. Is he fallen on his ecchoing heath; the youth with the breaſt of ſnow? he that was firſt in the chace of the hill; the foe of the ſtrangers of the ocean.——Du-

* Torman, *Thunder*. This is the true origin of the Jupiter Taramis of the ancients.

chomar

chomar thou art dark † indeed, and cruel is thy arm to Morna. But give me that ſword, my foe; I love the blood of Caithbat.

He gave the ſword to her tears; but ſhe pierced his manly breaſt. He fell, like the bank of a mountain-ſtream; ſtretched out his arm and ſaid;

Daughter of Cormac-cairbar, thou haſt ſlain Duchomar. The ſword is cold in my breaſt: Morna, I feel it cold. Give me to Moina * the maid; Duchomar was the dream of her night. She will raiſe my tomb; and the hunter ſhall ſee it and praiſe me. But draw the ſword from my breaſt; Morna, the ſteel is cold.

She came, in all her tears, ſhe came, and drew it from his breaſt. He pierced her white ſide with ſteel; and ſpread her fair locks on the ground. Her burſting blood ſounds from her ſide: and her white arm is ſtained with red. Rolling in death ſhe lay, and Tura's cave anſwered to her groans.——

Peace, ſaid Cuchullin, to the ſouls of the heroes; their deeds were great in danger. Let them ride around † me on clouds; and ſhew

† She alludes to his name——*the dark man.*

* Moina, *ſoft in temper and perſon.*

† It was the opinion then, as indeed it is to this day, of ſome of the highlanders, that the ſouls of the deceaſed hovered round their living friends; and ſometimes appeared to them when they were about to enter on any great undertaking.

their features of war: that my ſoul may be ſtrong in danger; my arm like the thunder of heaven.——But be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna, near the window of my reſt; when my thoughts are of peace; and the din of arms is over.——Gather the ſtrength of the tribes, and move to the wars of Erin.——Attend the car of my battles; rejoice in the noiſe of my courſe.——Place three ſpears by my ſide; follow the bounding of my ſteeds; that my ſoul may be ſtrong in my friends, when the battle darkens round the beams of my ſteel.

As ruſhes a ſtream * of foam from the dark ſhady ſteep of Cromla; when the thunder is rolling above, and dark-brown night on half the hill. So fierce, ſo vaſt, ſo terrible ruſhed on the ſons of Erin. The chief like a whale

* Ὡς δ' ὅτε χείμαῤῥοι ποταμοὶ, κατ' ὄρεσφι ῥέοντες
Ες μισγάϊκειαν συμβάλλετον ἤερίμον ὕδωρ,
Κρηνῶν ἐκ μεγάλων κοίλης ἔντοσθε χαράδρης. Hom.
As torrents roll encreas'd by numerous rills
With rage impetuous down the ecchoing hills;
Ruſh to the vales, and pour'd along the plain,
Roar thro' a thouſand channels to the main. Pope.
Aut ubi decurſu rapido de montibus altis,
Dant ſonitum ſpumoſi amnes, & in æquora currunt,
Quiſque ſuum populatus iter. Virg.

of

of ocean, whom all his billows follow, poured valour forth as a ſtream, rolling his might along the ſhore.

The ſons of Lochlin heard the noiſe as the ſound of a winter-ſtream. Swaran ſtruck his boſſy ſhield, and called the ſon of Arno. What murmur rolls along the hill like the gathered flies of evening? The ſons of Innis-fail deſcend, or ruſtling winds roar in the diſtant wood. Such is the noiſe of Gormal before the white tops of my waves ariſe. O ſon of Arno, aſcend the hill and view the dark face of the heath.

He went, and trembling, ſwift returned. His eyes rolled wildly round. His heart beat high againſt his ſide. His words were faultering, broken, ſlow.

Riſe, ſon of ocean, riſe chief of the dark-brown ſhields. I ſee the dark, the mountain-ſtream of the battle: the deep-moving ſtrength of the ſons of Erin.——The car, the car of battle comes, like the flame of death; the rapid car of Cuchullin, the noble ſon of Semo. It bends behind like a wave near a rock; like the golden miſt of the heath. Its ſides are emboſſed with ſtones, and ſparkle like the ſea round the boat

boat of night. Of poliſhed yew is its beam, and its ſeat of the ſmootheſt bone. The ſides are repleniſhed with ſpears; and the bottom is the footſtool of heroes. Before the right ſide of the car is ſeen the ſnorting horſe. The high-maned, broad-breaſted, proud, high-leaping, ſtrong ſteed of the hill. Loud and reſounding is his hoof; the ſpreading of his mane above is like that ſtream of ſmoke on the heath. Bright are the ſides of the ſteed, and his name is Sulin-Sifadda.

Before the left ſide of the car is ſeen the ſnorting horſe. The dark-maned, high-headed, ſtrong-hooffed, fleet, bounding ſon of the hill: his name is Duſronnal among the ſtormy ſons of the ſword.——A thouſand thongs bind the car on high. Hard poliſhed bits ſhine in a wreath of foam. Thin thongs bright-ſtudded with gems, bend on the ſtately necks of the ſteeds.——The ſteeds that like wreaths of miſt fly over the ſtreamy vales. The wildneſs of deer is in their courſe, the ſtrength of the eagle deſcending on her prey. Their noiſe is like the blaſt of winter on the ſides of the ſnow-headed Gormal *.

* A hill of Lochlin.

Within the car is ſeen the chief; the ſtrong ſtormy ſon of the ſword; the hero's name is Cuchullin, ſon of Semo king of ſhells. His red cheek is like my poliſhed yew. The look of his blue-rolling eye is wide beneath the dark arch of his brow. His hair flies from his head like a flame, as bending forward he wields the ſpear. Fly, king of ocean, fly; he comes, like a ſtorm, along the ſtreamy vale.

When did I fly, replied the king, from the battle of many ſpears? When did I fly, ſon of Arno, chief of the little ſoul? I met the ſtorm of Gormal when the foam of my waves was high; I met the ſtorm of the clouds and ſhall I fly from a hero? Were it Fingal himſelf my ſoul ſhould not darken before him.——Riſe to the battle, my thouſands; pour round me like the echoing main. Gather round the bright ſteel of your king; ſtrong as the rocks of my land; that meet the ſtorm with joy, and ſtretch their dark woods to the wind.

As autumn's * dark ſtorms pour from two echoing hills, towards each other approached the

* The reader may compare this paſſage with a ſimilar one in Homer. Iliad. 4. v. 446.

Now ſhield with ſhield, with helmet helmet clos'd,
To armour armour, lance to lance oppos'd.

Hoſt

the heroes.——As two dark ſtreams from high rocks meet, and mix and roar on the plain; loud, rough and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Innis-fail. Chief mixed his ſtrokes with chief, and man with man; ſteel, clanging, ſounded on ſteel, helmets are cleft on high. Blood burſts and ſmoaks around.——Strings twang on the poliſhed yews. Darts ruſh along the ſky. Spears fall like the circles of light that gild the ſtormy face of night.

As the troubled noiſe of the ocean when roll the waves on high; as the laſt peal of the thunder of heaven, ſuch is the noiſe of battle. Though Cormac's hundred bards were there to give the war to ſong; feeble were the voices of a hundred bards to ſend the deaths to future times. For many were the falls of the heroes; and wide poured the blood of the valiant.

Hoſt againſt hoſt, with ſhadowy ſquadrons drew,
The ſounding darts in iron tempeſts flew;
With ſtreaming blood the ſlipp'ry fields are dy'd,
And ſlaughter'd heroes ſwell the dreadful tide. Pope.

Statius has very happily imitated Homer.
Jam clypeus clypeis, umbone repellitur umbo,
Enſe minax enſis, pede pes, & cuſpide cuſpis, &c.
Arms on armour craſhing, bray'd
Horrible diſcord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots rag'd, &c. Milton.

Mourn, ye ſons of ſong, the death of the noble Sithallin *.——Let the ſighs of Fiöna riſe on the dark heaths of her lovely Ardan.——They fell, like two hinds of the deſart, by the hands of the mighty Swaran; when, in the midſt of thouſands he roared; like the ſhrill ſpirit of a ſtorm, that ſits dim, on the clouds of Gormal, and enjoys the death of the mariner.

Nor ſlept thy hand by thy ſide, chief of the iſle of miſt †; many were the deaths of thine arm, Cuchullin, thou ſon of Semo. His ſword was like the beam of heaven when it pierces the ſons of the vale; when the people are blaſted and fall, and all the hills are burning around. ——Duſronnal ‡ ſnorted over the bodies of heroes; and Sifadda || bathed his hoof in blood. The battle lay behind them as groves overturned on the deſart of Cromla; when the blaſt has paſſed the heath laden with the ſpirits of night.

* Sithallin ſignifies *a handſome man*;—Fiöna, *a fair maid*;—and Ardan, *pride*.

† The Iſle of Sky; not improperly called the *iſle of miſt*, as its high hills, which catch the clouds from the weſtern ocean, occaſion almoſt continual rains.

‡ One of Cuchullin's horſes. Dubhſtron-gheal.

|| Sith-fadda, *i. e. a long ſtride*.

Weep

Weep on the rocks of roaring winds, O maid of Iniſtore *, bend thy fair head over the waves, thou fairer than the ſpirit of the hills; when it moves in a ſun-beam at noon over the ſilence of Morven. He is fallen! thy youth is low; pale beneath the ſword of Cuchullin. No more ſhall valour raiſe the youth to match the blood of kings.——Trenar, lovely Trenar died, thou maid of Iniſtore. His gray dogs are howling at home, and ſee his paſſing ghoſt. His bow is in the hall unſtrung. No ſound is in the heath of his hinds.

As roll a thouſand waves to the rocks, ſo Swaran's hoſt came on; as meets a rock a thouſand waves, ſo Innis-fail met Swaran. Death raiſes all his voices around, and mixes with the ſound of ſhields.——Each hero is a pillar of darkneſs, and the ſword a beam of fire in his hand. The field echoes from wing to wing, as

* *The maid of Iniſtore* was the daughter of Gorlo king of Iniſtore or Orkney iſlands. Trenar was brother to the king of Iniſcon, ſuppoſed to be one of the iſlands of Shetland. The Orkneys and Shetland were at that time ſubject to the king of Lochlin. We find that the dogs of Trenar are ſenſible at home of the death of their maſter, the very inſtant he is killed.—— It was the opinion of the times, that the ſouls of heroes went immediately after death to the hills of their country, and the ſcenes they frequented the moſt happy time of their life. It was thought too that dogs and horſes ſaw the ghoſts of the deceaſed.

a hundred hammers that riſe by turns on the red ſon of the furnace.

Who are theſe on Lena's heath that are ſo gloomy and dark? Who are theſe like two clouds *, and their ſwords like lightning above them? The little hills are troubled around, and the rocks tremble with all their moſs.——Who is it but Ocean's ſon and the car-borne chief of Erin? Many are the anxious eyes of their friends, as they ſee them dim on the heath. Now night conceals the chiefs in her clouds, and ends the terrible fight.

It was on Cromla's ſhaggy ſide that Dorglas placed the deer †; the early fortune of the chace, before the heroes left the hill.——A hundred youths collect the heath; ten heroes blow the fire; three hundred chuſe the poliſh'd ſtones. The feaſt is ſmoaking wide.

* As when two black clouds
With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caſpian. Milton.

† The ancient manner of preparing feaſts after hunting, is handed down by tradition.—— A pit lined with ſmooth ſtones was made; and near it ſtood a heap of ſmooth flat ſtones of the flint kind. The ſtones as well as the pit were properly heated with heath. Then they laid ſome veniſon in the bottom, and a ſtratum of the ſtones above it; and thus they did alternately till the pit was full. The whole was covered over with heath to confine the ſteam. Whether this is probable I cannot ſay; but ſome pits are ſhewn, which the vulgar ſay, were uſed in that manner.

CUCHULLIN, chief of Erin's war, resumed his mighty soul. He stood upon his beamy spear, and spoke to the son of songs; to Carril of other times, the gray-haired son of Kinfena *. Is this feast spread for me alone and the king of Lochlin on Ullin's shore, far from the deer of his hills, and sounding halls of his feasts? Rise, Carril of other times, and carry my words to Swaran; tell him that came from the roaring of waters, that Cuchullin gives his feast. Here let him listen to the sound of my groves amidst the clouds of night.——For cold and bleak the blustering winds rush over the foam of his seas. Here let him praise the trembling harp, and hear the songs of heroes.

OLD Carril went, with softest voice, and called the king of dark-brown shields. Rise from the skins of thy chace, rise, Swaran king of groves.——Cuchullin gives the joy of shells; partake the feast of Erin's blue-eyed chief.

HE answered like the sullen sound of Cromla before a storm. Though all thy daughters, Innis-fail! should extend their arms of snow; raise high the heavings of their breasts, and softly roll their eyes of love; yet, fixed as Lochlin's thousand rocks, here Swaran shall re-

* Cean-feana, *i. e. the head of the people.*

main; till morn, with the young beams of my eaſt, ſhall light me to the death of Cuchullin. Pleaſant to my ear is Lochlin's wind. It ruſhes over my ſeas. It ſpeaks aloft in all my ſhrowds, and brings my green foreſts to my mind; the green foreſts of Gormal that often echoed to my winds, when my ſpear was red in the chace of the boar. Let dark Cuchullin yield to me the ancient throne of Cormac, or Erin's torrents ſhall ſhew from their hills the red foam of the blood of his pride.

Sad is the ſound of Swaran's voice, ſaid Carril of other times:——

Sad to himſelf alone, ſaid the blue-eyed ſon of Semo. But, Carril, raiſe thy voice on high, and tell the deeds of other times. Send thou the night away in ſong; and give the joy of grief. For many heroes and maids of love have moved on Innis-fail. And lovely are the ſongs of woe that are heard on Albion's rocks; when the noiſe of the chace is over, and the ſtreams of Cona anſwer to the voice of Oſſian *.

* Oſſian the ſon of Fingal and author of the poem. One cannot but admire the addreſs of the poet in putting his own praiſe ſo naturally into the mouth of Cuchullin. The Cona here mentioned is perhaps that ſmall river that runs through Glenco in Argyleſhire. One of the hills which environ that romantic valley is ſtill called Scorna-ſena, or the hill of Fingal's people.

In

In other days *, Carril replies, came the ſons of Ocean to Erin. A thouſand veſſels bounded over the waves to Ullin's lovely plains. The ſons of Innis-fail aroſe to meet the race of dark-brown ſhields. Cairbar, firſt of men, was there, and Grudar, ſtately youth. Long had they ſtrove for the ſpotted bull, that lowed on Golbun's † echoing heath. Each claimed him as his own; and death was often at the point of their ſteel.

Side by ſide the heroes fought, and the ſtrangers of Ocean fled. Whoſe name was fairer on the hill than the name of Cairbar and Grudar! ——But ah! why ever lowed the bull on Golbun's echoing heath? They ſaw him leaping like the ſnow. The wrath of the chiefs returned.

On Lubar's ‡ graſſy banks they fought, and Grudar like a ſun-beam, fell. Fierce Cairbar came to the vale of the echoing Tura, where

* This epiſode is introduced with propriety. Calmar and Connal, two of the Iriſh heroes, had diſputed warmly before the battle about engaging the enemy. Carril endeavours to reconcile them with the ſtory of Cairbar and Grudar; who, tho' enemies before, fought *ſide by ſide* in the war. The poet obtained his aim, for we find Calmar and Connal perfectly reconciled in the third book.

† Golb-bhean, as well as Cromleach, ſignifies *a crooked hill.* It is here the name of a mountain in the county of Sligo.

‡ Lubar—a river in Ulſter. *Labhar*, loud, noiſy.

Braſſolis,

Braſſolis *, faireſt of his ſiſters, all alone, raiſed the ſong of grief. She ſung of the actions of Grudar, the youth of her ſecret ſoul.——She mourned him in the field of blood; but ſtill ſhe hoped for his return. Her white boſom is ſeen from her robe, as the moon from the clouds of night. Her voice was ſofter than the harp to raiſe the ſong of grief. Her ſoul was fixed on Grudar; the ſecret look of her eye was his.—— When ſhalt thou come in thine arms, thou mighty in the war?——

Take, Braſſolis, Cairbar came and ſaid, take, Braſſolis, this ſhield of blood. Fix it on high within my hall, the armour of my foe. Her ſoft heart beat againſt her ſide. Diſtracted, pale, ſhe flew. She found her youth in all his blood; ſhe died on Cromla's heath. Here reſts their duſt, Cuchullin; and theſe two lonely yews, ſprung from their tombs, wiſh to meet on high. Fair was Braſſolis on the plain, and Grudar on the hill. The bard ſhall preſerve their names, and repeat them to future times.

Pleasant is thy voice, O Carril, ſaid the blue-eyed chief of Erin; and lovely are the words of other times. They are like the calm

* Braſſolis ſignifies *a woman with a white breaſt.*

ſhower

ſhower * of ſpring, when the ſun looks on the field, and the light cloud flies over the hills. O ſtrike the harp in praiſe of my love, the lonely ſun-beam of Dunſcaich. Strike the harp in the praiſe of Bragéla †, of her that I left in the Iſle of Miſt, the ſpouſe of Semo's ſon. Doſt thou raiſe thy fair face from the rock to find the ſails of Cuchullin?——The ſea is rolling far diſtant, and its white foam ſhall deceive thee for my ſails. Retire, for it is night, my love, and the dark winds ſigh in thy hair. Retire to the halls of my feaſts, and think of the times that are paſt: for I will not return till the ſtorm of war is ceaſed. O Connal, ſpeak of wars and arms, and ſend her from my mind, for lovely with her raven-hair is the white-boſomed daughter of Sorglan.

* Homer compares ſoft piercing words to the fall of ſnow.

—ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν ἐοικότα χειμερίῃσιν.

But when he ſpeaks, what elocution flows!
Like the ſoft fleeces of deſcending ſnows. Pope.

† Bragéla was the daughter of Sorglan, and the wife of Cuchullin.—Cuchullin, upon the death of Artho, ſupreme king of Ireland, paſſed over into Ireland, probably by Fingal's order, to take upon him the adminiſtration of affairs in that kingdom during the minority of Cormac the ſon of Artho. He left his wife Bragéla in Dunſcaich, the ſeat of the family, in the iſle of Sky, where the remains of his palace is ſtill ſhewn; and a ſtone, to which he bound his dog Luath, goes ſtill by his name.

Connal,

Connal, ſlow to ſpeak, replied, Guard againſt the race of Ocean. Send thy troop of night abroad, and watch the ſtrength of Swaran.——Cuchullin! I am for peace till the race of the deſart come; till Fingal come, the firſt of men, and beam, like the ſun, on our fields.

The hero ſtruck the ſhield of his alarms——the warriors of the night moved on. The reſt lay in the heath of the deer, and ſlept amidſt the duſky wind.——The ghoſts * of the lately dead were near, and ſwam on gloomy clouds. And far diſtant, in the dark ſilence of Lena, the feeble voices of death were heard.

* It was long the opinion of the ancient Scots, that a ghoſt was heard ſhrieking near the place where a death was to happen ſoon after. The accounts given, to this day, among the vulgar, of this extraordinary matter, are very poetical. The ghoſt comes mounted on a meteor, and ſurrounds twice or thrice the place deſtined for the perſon to die; and then goes along the road through which the funeral is to paſs, ſhrieking at intervals; at laſt, the meteor and ghoſt diſappear above the burial place.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT to Book II.

The ghoſt of Crugal, one of the Iriſh heroes who was killed in battle, appearing to Connal, foretels the defeat of Cuchullin in the next battle; and earneſtly adviſes him to make peace with Swaran. Connal communicates the viſion; but Cuchullin is inflexible; from a principle of honour he would not be the firſt to ſue for peace, and he reſolved to continue the war. Morning comes; Swaran propoſes diſhonourable terms to Cuchullin, which are rejected. The battle begins, and is obſtinately fought for ſome time, until, upon the flight of Grumal, the whole Iriſh army gave way. Cuchullin and Connal cover their retreat: Carril leads them to a neighbouring hill, whither they are ſoon followed by Cuchullin himſelf, who deſcries the fleet of Fingal making towards the coaſt; but, night coming on, he loſt ſight of it again. Cuchullin, dejected after his defeat, attributes his ill ſucceſs to the death of Ferda his friend, whom he had killed ſome time before. Carril, to ſhew that ill ſucceſs did not always attend thoſe who innocently killed their friends, introduces the epiſode of Comal and Galvina.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK II.

CONNAL * lay by the ſound of the mountain ſtream, beneath the aged tree. A ſtone, with its moſs, ſupported his head. Shrill thro'

* The ſcene of Connal's repoſe is familiar to thoſe who have been in the Highlands of Scotland. The poet removes him to a diſtance from the army, to add more horror to the deſcription of Crugal's ghoſt by the loneline ſs of the place. It perhaps will not be diſagreeable to the reader, to ſee how two other ancient poets handled a ſimilar ſubject.

Ηλθη δ' επι ψυχη Πατροκληος δειλοιο
Παντ' αυτῳ μιγέθος τε και ὄματα κατ' ειϰυῖα.
Και φωνη, &c. Hom. Il. 23.

When lo! the ſhade, before his cloſing eyes,
Of ſad Patroclus roſe or ſeem'd to riſe,
In the ſame robe he living wore, he came
In ſtature, voice, and pleaſing look the ſame.
The form familiar hover'd o'er his head,
And ſleeps Achilles thus? the phantom ſaid. Pope.

In ſomnis eccè ante oculos mæſtiſſimus Hector
Viſus addeſſe mihi, largoſque effundere fletus,
Raptatus bigis, ut quondam, aterque cruento
Pulvere perque pedes trajectus lora tumentes.

Hei

thro' the heath of Lena, he heard the voice of night. At diſtance from the heroes he lay, for the ſon of the ſword feared no foe.

My hero ſaw in his reſt a dark-red ſtream of fire coming down from the hill. Crugal ſat upon the beam, a chief that lately fell. He fell by the hand of Swaran, ſtriving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the ſetting moon; his robes are of the clouds of the hill: his eyes are like two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breaſt.

Crugal, ſaid the mighty Connal, ſon of Dedgal famed on the hill of deer. Why ſo pale and ſad, thou breaker of the ſhields?

Hei mihi qualis erat! quantum mutatus ab illo
Hectore, qui redit exũviis indutus Achilli,
Vel Danaũm Phrygios jaculatus puppibus ignes;
Squalentem barbam & concretos ſanguine crines
Vulneraque illa gerens quæ circum plurima muros
Accepit patrios. Æn. lib. 2.

When Hector's ghoſt before my ſight appears:
A bloody ſhroud he ſeem'd, and bath'd in tears.
Such as he was, when, by Pelides ſlain,
Theſſalian courſers drag'd him o'er the plain.
Swoln were his feet, as when the thongs were thruſt
Through the bor'd holes, his body black with duſt.
Unlike that Hector, who return'd from toils
Of war triumphant, in Æacian ſpoils:
Or him, who made the fainting Greeks retire,
And launch'd againſt their navy Phrygian fire.
His hair and beard ſtood ſtiffen'd with his gore;
And all the wounds he for his country bore. Dryden.

Thou

Thou haſt never been pale for fear.——What diſturbs the ſon of the hill?

Dim, and in tears, he ſtood and ſtretched his pale hand over the hero.——Faintly he raiſed his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego.

My ghoſt, O Connal, is on my native hills; but my corſe is on the ſands of Ullin. Thou ſhalt never talk with Crugal, or find his lone ſteps in the heath. I am light as the blaſt of Cromla, and I move like the ſhadow of miſt. Connal, ſon of Colgar *, I ſee the dark cloud of death: it hovers over the plains of Lena. The ſons of green Erin ſhall fall. Remove from the field of ghoſts.——Like the darkened moon † he retired, in the midſt of the whiſtling blaſt.

Stay, ſaid the mighty Connal, ſtay my dark-red friend. Lay by that beam of heaven, ſon of the windy Cromla. What cave of the hill is thy lonely houſe? What green-headed

* Connal the ſon of Caithbat, the friend of Cuchullin, is ſometimes, as here, called the ſon of Colgar; from one of that name who was the founder of his family.

† Ψυχη δε κατα χθονος, ηυτε καπνος
Ωχετο τετριγυια Hom. Il. 23. v. 100.
Like a thin ſmoke he ſees the ſpirit fly,
And hears a feeble, lamentable cry. Pope.

hill is the place of thy reſt? Shall we not hear thee in the ſtorm? In the noiſe of the mountain-ſtream? When the feeble ſons of the wind come forth, and ride on the blaſt of the deſart.

The ſoft-voiced Connal roſe in the midſt of his ſounding arms. He ſtruck his ſhield above Cuchullin. The ſon of battle waked.

Why, ſaid the ruler of the car, comes Connal through the night? My ſpear might turn againſt the ſound; and Cuchullin mourn the death of his friend. Speak, Connal, ſon of Colgar, ſpeak, thy counſel is like the ſon of heaven.

Son of Semo, replied the chief, the ghoſt of Crugal came from the cave of his hill.——The ſtars dim-twinkled through his form; and his voice was like the ſound of a diſtant ſtream. ——He is a meſſenger of death.——He ſpeaks of the dark and narrow houſe. Sue for peace, O chief of Dunſcaich; or fly over the heath of Lena.

He ſpoke to Connal, replied the hero, though ſtars dim-twinkled through his form. Son of Colgar, it was the wind that murmured in the caves of Lena.——Or if it was the form* of Crugal,

* The poet teaches us the opinions that prevailed in his time concerning the ſtate of ſeparate ſouls. From Connal's expreſſion, "That

Crugal, why didſt thou not force him to my ſight. Haſt thou enquired where is his cave? The houſe of the ſon of the wind? My ſword might find that voice, and force his knowledge from him. And ſmall is his knowledge, Connal, for he was here to-day. He could not have gone beyond our hills, and who could tell him there of our death?

Ghosts fly on clouds and ride on winds, ſaid Connal's voice of wiſdom. They reſt together in their caves, and talk of mortal men.

Then let them talk of mortal men; of every man but Erin's chief. Let me be forgot in their cave; for I will not fly from Swaran.——If I muſt fall, my tomb ſhall riſe amidſt the fame of future times. The hunter ſhall ſhed a tear on my ſtone; and ſorrow dwell round the high-boſomed Bragéla. I fear not death, but I fear to fly, for Fingal ſaw me often victorious. Thou dim phantom of the hill, ſhew thyſelf to me! come on thy beam of heaven, and ſhew me my death in thine hand; yet will I not fly, thou feeble ſon of the wind. Go, ſon of Colgar, ſtrike the ſhield of Caithbat, it hangs be-

"That the ſtars dim-twinkled through the form of Crugal," and Cuchullin's reply, we may gather that they both thought the ſoul was material; ſomething like the εἴδωλον of the ancient Greeks.

tween the ſpears. Let my heroes riſe to the ſound in the midſt of the battles of Erin. Though Fingal delays his coming with the race of the ſtormy hills; we ſhall fight, O Colgar's ſon, and die in the battle of heroes.

The ſound ſpreads wide; the heroes riſe, like the breaking of a blue-rolling wave. They ſtood on the heath, like oaks with all their branches round them *; when they eccho to the ſtream of froſt, and their withered leaves ruſtle to the wind.

High Cromla's head of clouds is gray; the morning trembles on the half-enlightened ocean. The blue, gray miſt ſwims ſlowly by, and hides the ſons of Innis-fail.

Riſe ye, ſaid the king of the dark-brown ſhields, ye that came from Lochlin's waves. The ſons of Erin have fled from our arms—— purſue them over the plains of Lena.——And, Morla, go to Cormac's hall and bid them yield to Swaran; before the people ſhall fall into the tomb; and the hills of Ullin be ſilent.—— They roſe like a flock of ſea-fowl when the waves expel them from the ſhore. Their ſound

* ——As when heaven's fire
Hath ſcath'd the foreſt oaks, or mountain pines
With ſinged tops, their ſtately growth tho' bare
Stand on the blaſted heath. Milton.

was like a thouſand ſtreams that meet in Cona's vale, when after a ſtormy night, they turn their dark eddies beneath the pale light of the morning.

As the dark ſhades of autumn fly over the hills of graſs; ſo gloomy, dark, ſucceſſive came the chiefs of Lochlin's echoing woods. Tall as the ſtag of Morven moved on the king of groves. His ſhining ſhield is on his ſide like a flame on the heath at night, when the world is ſilent and dark, and the traveller ſees ſome ghoſt ſporting in the beam.

A blast from the troubled ocean removed the ſettled miſt. The ſons of Innis-fail appear like a ridge of rocks on the ſhore.

Go, Morla, go, ſaid Lochlin's king, and offer peace to theſe. Offer the terms we give to kings when nations bow before us. When the valiant are dead in war, and the virgins weeping on the field.

Great Morla came, the ſon of Swart, and ſtately ſtrode the king of ſhields. He ſpoke to Erin's blue-eyed ſon, among the leſſer heroes.

Take Swaran's peace, the warrior ſpoke, the peace he gives to kings, when the nations bow before him. Leave Ullin's lovely plains to us, and give thy ſpouſe and day. Thy ſpouſe high-boſom'd heaving fair. Thy dog that

overtakes the wind. Give theſe to prove the weakneſs of thine arm, and live beneath our power.

Tell Swaran, tell that heart of pride, that Cuchullin never yields.——I give him the dark-blue rolling of ocean, or I give his people graves in Erin! Never ſhall a ſtranger have the lovely ſun-beam of Dunſcaich; nor ever deer fly on Lochlin's hills before the nimble-footed Luäth.

Vain ruler of the car, ſaid Morla, wilt thou fight the king; that king whoſe ſhips of many groves could carry off thine Iſle? So little is thy green-hilled Ullin to the king of ſtormy waves.

In words I yield to many, Morla; but this ſword ſhall yield to none. Erin ſhall own the ſway of Cormac, while Connal and Cuchullin live. O Connal, firſt of mighty men, thou haſt heard the words of Morla; ſhall thy thoughts then be of peace, thou breaker of the ſhields? Spirit of fallen Crugal! why didſt thou threaten us with death? The narrow houſe ſhall receive me in the midſt of the light of renown.——Exalt, ye ſons of Innis-fail, exalt the ſpear and bend the bow; ruſh on the foe in darkneſs, as the ſpirits of ſtormy nights.

Then

Then dismal, roaring, fierce, and deep the gloom of battle rolled along; as mist * that is poured on the valley, when storms invade the silent sun-shine of heaven. The chief moves before in arms, like an angry ghost before a cloud; when meteors inclose him with fire; and the dark winds are in his hand.——Carril, far on the heath, bids the horn of battle sound. He raises the voice of the song, and pours his soul into the minds of heroes.

Where, said the mouth of the song, where is the fallen Crugal? He lies forgot on earth, and the hall of shells † is silent.——Sad is the spouse of Crugal, for she is a stranger ‡ in the hall of her sorrow. But who is she, that, like a sun-beam, flies before the ranks of the foe? It is Degrena ||, lovely fair, the spouse of fallen Crugal. Her hair is on the wind behind. Her

* ——As evening mist
Ris'n from a river o'er the marish glides
And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel
Homeward returning Milton.

† The ancient Scots, as well as the present highlanders, drunk in shells; hence it is that we so often meet, in the old poetry, with the *chief of shells*, and *the halls of shells*.

‡ Crugal had married Degrena but a little time before the battle, consequently she may with propriety be called a stranger in the hall of her sorrow.

|| Deo-ghréna signifies a *sun beam*.

eye is red; her voice is ſhrill. Green, empty is thy Crugal now, his form is in the cave of the hill. He comes to the ear of reſt, and raiſes his feeble voice; like the humming of the mountain-bee, or collected flies of evening. But Degrena falls like a cloud of the morn; the ſword of Lochlin is in her ſide. Cairbar, ſhe is fallen, the riſing thought of thy youth. She is fallen, O Cairbar, the thought of thy youthful hours.

Fierce Cairbar heard the mournful ſound, and ruſhed on like ocean's whale; he ſaw the death of his daughter; and roared in the midſt of thouſands *. His ſpear met a ſon of Lochlin, and battle ſpread from wing to wing. As a hundred winds in Lochlin's groves, as fire in the firs of a hundred hills; ſo loud, ſo ruinous and vaſt the ranks of men are hewn down.—— Cuchullin cut off heroes like thiſtles, and Swaran waſted Erin. Curach fell by his hand, and Cairbar of the boſſy ſhield. Morglan lies in laſting reſt; and Ca-olt quivers as he dies. His white breaſt is ſtained with his blood; and his yellow hair ſtretched in the duſt of his native land. He often had ſpread the feaſt where he fell; and often raiſed the voice of the harp:

* *Mediiſque in millibus ardet.* Virg.

when

when his dogs leapt around for joy; and the youths of the chace prepared the bow.

Still Swaran advanced, as a ſtream that burſts from the deſart. The little hills are rolled in its courſe; and the rocks half-ſunk by its ſide. But Cuchullin ſtood before him like a hill *, that catches the clouds of heaven.——The winds contend on its head of pines; and the hail rattles on its rocks. But, firm in its ſtrength, it ſtands and ſhades the ſilent vale of Cona.

So Cuchullin ſhaded the ſons of Erin, and ſtood in the midſt of thouſands. Blood riſes like the fount of a rock, from panting heroes around him. But Erin falls on either wing like ſnow in the day of the ſun.

* Virgil and Milton have made uſe of a compariſon ſimilar to this; I ſhall lay both before the reader, and let him judge for himſelf which of theſe two great poets have beſt ſucceeded.

Quantus Athos, aut quantus Eryx, aut ipſe coruſcis,
Cum fremit ilicibus, quantus gaudetque nivali
Vertice ſe attollens pater Appeninus ad auras.
Like Eryx or like Athos great he ſhews
Or father Appenine when white with ſnows;
His head divine obſcure in clouds he hides,
And ſhakes the ſounding foreſt on his ſides. Dryden.

On th' other ſide Satan alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated ſtood
Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd:
His ſtature reach'd the ſky. Milton.

O SONS

O sons of Innis-fail, said Grumal, Lochlin conquers on the field. Why ſtrive we as reeds againſt the wind? Fly to the hill of dark-brown hinds. He fled like the ſtag of Morven, and his ſpear is a trembling beam of light behind him. Few fled with Grumal, the chief of the little ſoul: they fell in the battle of heroes on Lena's echoing heath.

High on his car, of many gems, the chief of Erin ſtood; he ſlew a mighty ſon of Lochlin, and ſpoke, in haſte, to Connal. O Connal, firſt of mortal men, thou haſt taught this arm of death! Though Erin's ſons have fled, ſhall we not fight the foe? O Carril, ſon of other times, carry my living friends to that buſhy hill. —— Here, Connal, let us ſtand like rocks, and ſave our flying friends.

Connal mounts the car of light. They ſtretch their ſhields like the darkened moon, the daughter of the ſtarry ſkies, when ſhe moves, a dun circle, through heaven. Sithfadda panted up the hill, and Duſronnel haughty ſteed. Like waves behind a whale behind them ruſhed the foe.

Now on the riſing ſide of Cromla ſtood Erin's few ſad ſons; like a grove through which the flame had ruſhed hurried on by the winds of the ſtormy night. —— Cuchullin ſtood beſide an oak.

oak. He rolled his red eye in ſilence, and heard the wind in his buſhy hair; when the ſcout of ocean came, Moran the ſon of Fithil. ——The ſhips, he cried, the ſhips of the lonely iſle! There Fingal comes, the firſt of men, the breaker of the ſhields. The waves foam before his black prows. His maſts with ſails are like groves in clouds.

Blow, ſaid Cuchullin, all ye winds that ruſh over my iſle of lovely miſt. Come to the death of thouſands, O chief of the hills of hinds. Thy ſails, my friend, are to me like the clouds of the morning; and thy ſhips like the light of heaven; and thou thyſelf like a pillar of fire that giveth light in the night. O Connal, firſt of men, how pleaſant are our friends! But the night is gathering around; where now are the ſhips of Fingal? Here let us paſs the hours of darkneſs, and wiſh for the moon of heaven.

The winds came down on the woods. The torrents ruſhed from the rocks. Rain gathered round the head of Cromla. And the red ſtars trembled between the flying clouds. Sad, by the ſide of a ſtream whoſe ſound was echoed by a tree, ſad by the ſide of a ſtream the chief of Erin ſat. Connal ſon of Colgar was there, and Carril of other times.

Unhappy

Unhappy is the hand of Cuchullin, ſaid the ſon of Semo, unhappy is the hand of Cuchullin ſince he ſlew his friend.——Ferda, thou ſon of Damman, I loved thee as myſelf.

How, Cuchullin, ſon of Semo, fell the breaker of the ſhields? Well I remember, ſaid Connal, the noble ſon of Damman. Tall and fair he was like the rain-bow of the hill.

Ferda from Albion came, the chief of a hundred hills. In Muri's * hall he learned the ſword, and won the friendſhip of Cuchullin. We moved to the chace together; and one was our bed in the heath.

Deugala was the ſpouſe of Cairbar, chief of the plains of Ullin. She was covered with the light of beauty, but her heart was the houſe of pride. She loved that ſun-beam of youth, the noble ſon of Damman. Cairbar, ſaid the white-armed woman, give me half of the herd. No more I will remain in your halls. Divide the herd, dark Cairbar.

* Muri, ſay the Iriſh bards, was an academy in Ulſter for teaching the uſe of arms. The ſignification of the word is a *cluſter of people*; which renders the opinion probable. Cuchullin is ſaid to have been the firſt who introduced into Ireland complete armour of ſteel. He is famous, among the Senachies, for teaching horſemanſhip to the Iriſh, and for being the firſt who uſed a chariot in that kingdom; which laſt circumſtance was the occaſion of Oſſian's being ſo circumſtantial in his deſcription of Cuchullin's car, in the firſt book.

Let

Let Cuchullin, ſaid Cairbar, divide my herd on the hill. His breaſt is the ſeat of juſtice. Depart, thou light of beauty.——I went and divided the herd. One ſnow-white bull remained. I gave that bull to Cairbar. The wrath of Deugala roſe.

Son of Damman, begun the fair, Cuchullin pains my ſoul. I muſt hear of his death, or Lubar's ſtream ſhall roll over me. My pale ghoſt ſhall wander near thee, and mourn the wound of my pride. Pour out the blood of Cuchullin or pierce this heaving breaſt.

Deugala, ſaid the fair-haired youth, how ſhall I ſlay the ſon of Semo? He is the friend of my ſecret thoughts, and ſhall I lift the ſword? She wept three days before him, on the fourth he conſented to fight.

I will fight my friend, Deugala! but may I fall by his ſword. Could I wander on the hill and behold the grave of Cuchullin? We fought on the hills of Muri. Our ſwords avoid a wound. They ſlide on the helmets of ſteel; and ſound on the ſlippery ſhields. Deugala was near with a ſmile, and ſaid to the ſon of Damman, thine arm is feeble, thou ſon-beam of youth. Thy years are not ſtrong for ſteel.——Yield to the ſon of Semo. He is like the rock of Malmor.

The

The tear is in the eye of youth. He faultering ſaid to me, Cuchullin, raiſe thy boſſy ſhield. Defend thee from the hand of thy friend. My ſoul is laden with grief: for I muſt ſlay the chief of men.

I sighed as the wind in the chink of a rock. I lifted high the edge of my ſteel. The ſun-beam of the battle fell; the firſt of Cuchullin's friends.——

Unhappy is the hand of Cuchullin ſince the hero fell.

Mournful is thy tale, ſon of the car, ſaid Carril of other times. It ſends my ſoul back to the ages of old, and to the days of other years. ——Often have I heard of Comal who ſlew the friend he loved; yet victory attended his ſteel; and the battle was conſumed in his preſence.

Comal was a ſon of Albion; the chief of an hundred hills. His deer drunk of a thouſand ſtreams. A thouſand rocks replied to the voice of his dogs. His face was the mildneſs of youth. His hand the death of heroes. One was his love, and fair was ſhe! the daughter of mighty Conloch. She appeared like a ſun-beam among women. And her hair was like the wing of the raven. Her dogs were taught to the chace. Her bow-ſtring ſounded on the winds of the foreſt. Her ſoul was fixed on Comal. Often

met

met their eyes of love. Their courſe in the chace was one, and happy were their words in ſecret.——But Gormal loved the maid, the dark chief of the gloomy Ardven. He watched her lone ſteps in the heath; the foe of unhappy Comal.

ONE day, tired of the chace, when the miſt had concealed their friends, Comal and the daughter of Conloch met in the cave of Ronan *. It was the wonted haunt of Comal. Its ſides were hung with his arms. A hundred ſhields of thongs were there; a hundred helms of ſounding ſteel.

REST here, he ſaid, my love Galvina; thou light of the cave of Ronan. A deer appears on Mora's brow. I go; but I will ſoon return. I fear, ſhe ſaid, dark Grumal my foe; he haunts the cave of Ronan. I will reſt among the arms; but ſoon return, my love.

* The unfortunate death of this Ronan is the ſubject of the ninth fragment of ancient poetry publiſhed laſt year; it is not the work of Oſſian, though it is writ in his manner, and bears the genuine marks of antiquity.—The conciſe expreſſions of Oſſian are imitated, but the thoughts are too jejune and confined to be the production of that poet.—Many poems go under his name that have been evidently compoſed ſince his time; they are very numerous in Ireland, and ſome have come to the tranſlator's hands. They are trivial and dull to the laſt degree; ſwelling into ridiculous bombaſt, or ſinking into the loweſt kind of proſaic ſtyle.

He went to the deer of Mora. The daughter of Conloch would try his love. She cloathed her white ſides with his armour, and ſtrode from the cave of Ronan. He thought it was his foe. His heart beat high. His colour changed, and darkneſs dimmed his eyes. He drew the bow. The arrow flew. Galvina fell in blood. He run with wildneſs in his ſteps and called the daughter of Conloch. No anſwer in the lonely rock. Where art thou, O my love! He ſaw, at length, her heaving heart beating around the feathered dart. O Conloch's daughter, is it thou? He ſunk upon her breaſt.

The hunters found the hapleſs pair; he afterwards walked the hill. But many and ſilent were his ſteps round the dark dwelling of his love. The fleet of the ocean came. He fought; the ſtrangers fled. He ſearched for his death over the field. But who could kill the mighty Comal! He threw away his dark-brown ſhield. An arrow found his manly breaſt. He ſleeps with his loved Galvina at the noiſe of the ſounding ſurge. Their green tombs are ſeen by the mariner, when he bounds on the waves of the north.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT to Book III.

Cuchullin, pleaſed with the ſtory of Carril, inſiſts with that bard for more of his ſongs. He relates the actions of Fingal in Lochlin, and death of Agandecca the beautiful ſiſter of Swaran. He had ſcarce finiſhed when Calmar the ſon of Matha, who had adviſed the firſt battle, came wounded from the field, and told them of Swaran's deſign to ſurpriſe the remains of the Iriſh army. He himſelf propoſes to withſtand ſingly the whole force of the enemy, in a narrow paſs, till the Iriſh ſhould make good their retreat. Cuchullin, touched with the gallant propoſal of Calmar, reſolves to accompany him, and orders Carril to carry off the few that remained of the Iriſh. Morning comes, Calmar dies of his wounds; and, the ſhips of the Caledonians appearing, Swaran gives over the purſuit of the Iriſh, and returns to oppoſe Fingal's landing. Cuchullin aſhamed, after his defeat, to appear before Fingal, retires to the cave of Tura. Fingal engages the enemy, puts them to flight; but the coming on of night makes the victory not deciſive. The king, who had obſerved the gallant behaviour of his grandſon Oſcar, gives him advices concerning his conduct in peace and war. He recommends to him to place the example of his fathers before his eyes, as the beſt model for his conduct; which introduces the epiſode concerning Fainaſóllis, the daughter of the king of Craca, whom Fingal had taken under his protection, in his youth. Fillan and Oſcar are diſpatched to obſerve the motions of the enemy by night; Gaul the ſon of Morni deſires the command of the army, in the next battle; which Fingal promiſes to give him. Some general reflections of the poet cloſe the third day.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK III*.

PLEASANT are the words of the ſong, ſaid Cuchullin, and lovely are the tales of other times. They are like the calm dew of the morning on the hill of roes, when the ſun is faint on its ſide, and the lake is ſettled and blue in the vale. O Carril, raiſe again thy voice, and let me hear the ſong of Tura: which was ſung in my halls of joy, when Fingal king of ſhields was there, and glowed at the deeds of his fathers.

* The ſecond night, ſince the opening of the poem, continues; and Cuchullin, Connal, and Carril ſtill ſit in the place deſcribed in the preceding book. The ſtory of Agandecca is introduced here with propriety, as great uſe is made of it in the courſe of the poem, and as it, in ſome meaſure, brings about the cataſtrophe.

FINGAL! thou man of battle, ſaid Carril, early were thy deeds in arms. Lochlin was conſumed in thy wrath, when thy youth ſtrove with the beauty of maids. They ſmiled at the fair-blooming face of the hero; but death was in his hands. He was ſtrong as the waters of Lora. His followers were like the roar of a thouſand ſtreams. They took the king of Lochlin in battle, but reſtored him to his ſhips. His big heart ſwelled with pride; and the death of the youth was dark in his ſoul.——For none ever, but Fingal, overcame the ſtrength of the mighty Starno *.

HE ſat in the halls of his ſhells in Lochlin's woody land. He called the grey-haired Snivan, that often ſung round the circle † of Loda: when the ſtone of power heard his cry, and the battle turned in the field of the valiant.

Go; gray-haired Snivan, Starno ſaid, to Ardven's ſea-ſurrounded rocks. Tell to Fingal king of the deſart; he that is the faireſt among his thouſands, tell him I give him my daughter, the lovelieſt maid that ever heaved a breaſt of

* Starno was the father of Swaran as well as Agandecca.—— His fierce and cruel character is well marked in other poems concerning the times.

† This paſſage moſt certainly alludes to the religion of Lochlin, and *the ſtone of power* here mentioned is the image of one of the deities of Scandanavia.

ſnow. Her arms are white as the foam of my waves. Her ſoul is generous and mild. Let him come with his braveſt heroes to the daughter of the ſecret hall.

Snivan came to Albion's windy hills: and fair-haired Fingal went. His kindled ſoul flew before him as he bounded on the waves of the north.

Welcome, ſaid the dark-brown Starno, welcome, king of rocky Morven; and ye his heroes of might; ſons of the lonely iſle! Three days within my halls ſhall ye feaſt; and three days purſue my boars, that your fame may reach the maid that dwells in the ſecret hall.

The king of ſnow * deſigned their death, and gave the feaſt of ſhells. Fingal, who doubted the foe, kept on his arms of ſteel. The ſons of death were afraid, and fled from the eyes of the hero. The voice of ſprightly mirth aroſe. The trembling harps of joy are ſtrung. Bards ſing the battle of heroes; or the heaving breaſt of love.——Ullin, Fingal's bard, was there; the ſweet voice of the hill of Cona. He praiſed the daughter of ſnow; and Morven's † high-de-

* Starno is here poetically called the king of ſnow, from the great quantities of ſnow that fall in his dominions.

† All the North-weſt coaſt of Scotland probably went of old under the name of Morven, which ſignifies a ridge of very high hills.

ſcended chief.——The daughter of ſnow overheard, and left the hall of her ſecret ſigh. She came in all her beauty, like the moon from the cloud of the eaſt.——Lovelineſs was around her as light. Her ſteps were like the muſic of ſongs. She ſaw the youth and loved him. He was the ſtolen ſigh of her ſoul. Her blue eye rolled on him in ſecret: and ſhe bleſt the chief of Morven.

The third day, with all its beams, ſhone bright on the wood of boars. Forth moved the dark-browed Starno; and Fingal, king of ſhields. Half the day they ſpent in the chace; and the ſpear of Fingal was red in the blood of Gormal *.

It was then the daughter of Starno, with blue eyes rolling in tears, came with her voice of love and ſpoke to the king of Morven.

Fingal, high-deſcended chief, truſt not Starno's heart of pride. Within that wood he has placed his chiefs; beware of the wood of death. But, remember, ſon of the hill, remember Agandecca: ſave me from the wrath of my father, king of the windy Morven!

* Gormal is the name of a hill in Lochlin, in the neighbourhood of Starno's palace.

The

The youth, with unconcern, went on; his heroes by his ſide. The ſons of death fell by his hand; and Gormal echoed around.

Before the halls of Starno the ſons of the chace convened. The king's dark brows were like clouds. His eyes like meteors of night. Bring hither, he cries, Agandecca to her lovely king of Morven. His hand is ſtained with the blood of my people; and her words have not been in vain.——

She came with the red eye of tears. She came with her looſe raven locks. Her white breaſt heaved with ſighs, like the foam of the ſtreamy Lubar. Starno pierced her ſide with ſteel. She fell like a wreath of ſnow that ſlides from the rocks of Ronan; when the woods are ſtill, and the echo deepens in the vale.

Then Fingal eyed his valiant chiefs, his valiant chiefs took arms. The gloom of the battle roared, and Lochlin fled or died.——Pale, in his bounding ſhip he cloſed the maid of the raven hair. Her tomb aſcends on Ardven, and the ſea roars round the dark dwelling of Agandecca.

Bleſſed be her ſoul, ſaid Cuchullin, and bleſſed be the mouth of the ſong.——Strong was the youth of Fingal, and ſtrong is his arm of age. Lochlin ſhall fall again before the king of echoing Morven. Shew thy face from a

cloud, O moon; light his white ſails on the wave of the night. And if any ſtrong ſpirit * of heaven ſits on that low-hung cloud; turn his dark ſhips from the rock, thou rider of the ſtorm!

Such were the words of Cuchullin at the ſound of the mountain-ſtream, when Calmar aſcended the hill, the wounded ſon of Matha. From the field he came in his blood. He leaned on his bending ſpear. Feeble is the arm of battle! but ſtrong the ſoul of the hero!

Welcome! O ſon of Matha, ſaid Connal, welcome art thou to thy friends! Why burſts that broken ſigh from the breaſt of him that never feared before?

And never, Connal, will he fear, chief of the pointed ſteel. My ſoul brightens in danger, and exults in the noiſe of battle. I am of the race of ſteel; my fathers never feared.

Cormar was the firſt of my race. He ſported through the ſtorms of the waves. His black ſkiff bounded on ocean, and travelled on the wings of

* This is the only paſſage in the poem that has the appearance of religion.—But Cuchullin's apoſtrophe to this ſpirit is accompanied with a doubt; ſo that it is not eaſy to determine whether the hero meant a ſuperior being, or the ghoſts of deceaſed warriors, who were ſuppoſed in thoſe times to rule the ſtorms, and to tranſport themſelves in a guſt of wind from one country to another.

the

the blaſt. A ſpirit once embroiled the night. Seas ſwell and rocks reſound. Winds drive along the clouds. The lightning flies on wings of fire. He feared and came to land: then bluſhed that he feared at all. He ruſhed again among the waves to find the ſon of the wind. Three youths guide the bounding bark; he ſtood with the ſword unſheathed. When the low-hung vapour paſſed, he took it by the curling head, and ſearched its dark womb with his ſteel. The ſon of the wind forſook the air. The moon and ſtars returned.

Such was the boldneſs of my race; and Calmar is like his fathers. Danger flies from the uplifted ſword. They beſt ſucceed who dare.

But now, ye ſons of green-vallyed Erin, retire from Lena's bloody heath. Collect the ſad remnant of our friends, and join the ſword of Fingal. I heard the ſound of Lochlin's advancing arms; but Calmar will remain and fight. My voice ſhall be ſuch, my friends, as if thouſands were behind me. But, ſon of Semo, remember me. Remember Calmar's lifeleſs corſe. After Fingal has waſted the field, place me by ſome ſtone of remembrance, that future times may hear my fame; and the mother * of Calmar rejoice over the ſtone of my renown.

* Alclétha, her lamentation over her ſon is introduced in the poem concerning the death of Cuchulain, printed in this collection.

No:

No: ſon of Matha, ſaid Cuchullin, I will never leave thee. My joy is in the unequal field: my ſoul increaſes in danger. Connal, and Carril of other times, carry off the ſad ſons of Erin; and when the battle is over, ſearch for our pale corſes in this narrow way. For near this oak we ſhall ſtand in the ſtream of the battle of thouſands.——O Fithil's ſon, with feet of wind, fly over the heath of Lena. Tell to Fingal that Erin is inthralled, and bid the king of Morven haſten. O let him come like the ſun in a ſtorm, when he ſhines on the hills of graſs.

Morning is gray on Cromla; the ſons of the ſea aſcend. Calmar ſtood forth to meet them in the pride of his kindling ſoul. But pale was the face of the warrior; he leaned on his father's ſpear. That ſpear which he brought from Lara's hall, when the ſoul of his mother was ſad.——But ſlowly now the hero falls like a tree on the plains of Cona. Dark Cuchullin ſtands alone like a rock * in a ſandy vale. The

* ——— ἠΰτε πέτρη
Ηλίβατος, μεγάλη, πολιῆς ἁλὸς εἰγυὶς ἐοῦσα, &c.
Hom. Il. 15.
So ſome tall rock o'erhangs the hoary main,
By winds aſſail'd, by billows beat in vain,
Unmov'd it hears, above, the tempeſts blow,
And ſees the watry mountains break below. Pope.

ſea

ſea comes with its waves, and roars on its hardened ſides. Its head is covered with foam, and the hills are echoing around.——Now from the gray miſt of the ocean, the white-ſailed ſhips of Fingal appear. High is the grove of their maſts as they nod, by turns, on the rolling wave.

Swaran ſaw them from the hill, and returned from the ſons of Erin. As ebbs the reſounding ſea through the hundred iſles of Iniſtore; ſo loud, ſo vaſt, ſo immenſe returned the ſons of Lochlin againſt the king of the deſert hill. But bending, weeping, ſad, and ſlow, and dragging his long ſpear behind, Cuchullin ſunk in Cromla's wood, and mourned his fallen friends. He feared the face of Fingal, who was wont to greet him from the fields of renown.

How many lie there of my heroes! the chiefs of Innis-fail! they that were chearful in the hall when the ſound of the ſhells aroſe. No more ſhall I find their ſteps in the heath, or hear their voice in the chace of the hinds. Pale, ſilent, low on bloody beds are they who were my friends! O ſpirits of the lately-dead, meet Cuchullin on his heath. Converſe with him on the wind, when the ruſtling tree of Tura's cave reſounds. There, far remote, I ſhall lie unknown. No bard ſhall hear of me. No gray

ſtone

ſtone ſhall riſe to my renown. Mourn me with the dead, O Bragela! departed is my fame.

Such were the words of Cuchullin when he ſunk in the woods of Cromla.

Fingal, tall in his ſhip, ſtretched his bright lance before him. Terrible was the gleam of the ſteel: it was like the green meteor of death, ſetting in the heath of Malmor, when the traveller is alone, and the broad moon is darkened in heaven.

The battle is over, ſaid the king, and I behold the blood of my friends. Sad is the heath of Lena; and mournful the oaks of Cromla: the hunters have fallen there in their ſtrength; and the ſon of Semo is no more.——Ryno and Fillan, my ſons, ſound the horn of Fingal's war. Aſcend that hill on the ſhore, and call the children of the foe. Call them from the grave of Lamdarg, the chief of other times.—— Be your voice like that of your father, when he enters the battles of his ſtrength. I wait for the dark mighty man; I wait on Lena's ſhore for Swaran. And let him come with all his race; for ſtrong in battle are the friends of the dead.

Fair Ryno flew like lightning; dark Fillan as the ſhade of autumn. On Lena's heath their voice is heard; the ſons of ocean heard the horn of Fingal's war. As the roaring eddy of

ocean

ocean returning from the kingdom of ſnows; ſo ſtrong, ſo dark, ſo ſudden came down the ſons of Lochlin. The king in their front appears in the diſmal pride of his arms. Wrath burns in his dark-brown face: and his eyes roll in the fire of his valour.

Fingal beheld the ſon of Starno; and he remembered Agandecca.——For Swaran with the tears of youth had mourned his white-boſomed ſiſter. He ſent Ullin of the ſongs to bid him to the feaſt of ſhells. For pleaſant on Fingal's ſoul returned the remembrance of the firſt of his loves.

Ullin came with aged ſteps, and ſpoke to Starno's ſon. O thou that dwelleſt afar, ſurrounded, like a rock, with thy waves, come to the feaſt of the king, and paſs the day in reſt. To-morrow let us fight, O Swaran, and break the echoing ſhields.

To-day, ſaid Starno's wrathful ſon, we break the echoing ſhields: to-morrow my feaſt will be ſpread; and Fingal lie on earth.

And to-morrow let his feaſt be ſpread, ſaid Fingal with a ſmile; for to-day, O my ſons, we ſhall break the echoing ſhields.——Oſſian, ſtand thou near my arm. Gaul, lift thy terrible ſword. Fergus, bend thy crooked yew. Throw, Fillan, thy lance through heaven.——Lift your

ſhields

ſhields like the darkened moon. Be your ſpears the meteors of death. Follow me in the path of my fame; and equal my deeds in battle.

As a hundred winds on Morven; as the ſtreams of a hundred hills; as clouds fly ſucceſſive over heaven; or, as the dark ocean aſſaults the ſhore of the deſert: ſo roaring, ſo vaſt, ſo terrible the armies mixed on Lena's echoing heath.——The groan of the people ſpread over the hills; it was like the thunder of night, when the cloud burſts on Cona; and a thouſand ghoſts ſhriek at once on the hollow wind.

FINGAL ruſhed on in his ſtrength, terrible as the ſpirit of Trenmor; when, in a whirlwind, he comes to Morven to ſee the children of his pride. The oaks reſound on their hills, and the rocks fall down before him.——Bloody was the hand of my father when he whirled the lightning of his ſword. He remembers the battles of his youth, and the field is waſted in his courſe.

RYNO went on like a pillar of fire.——Dark is the brow of Gaul. Fergus ruſhed forward with feet of wind; and Fillan like the miſt of the hill.——Myſelf *, like a rock, came down, I

* Here the poet celebrates his own actions, but he does it in ſuch a manner that we are not diſpleaſed. The mention of the great actions of his youth immediately ſuggeſts to him the helpleſs ſituation of his age. We do not deſpiſe him for ſelfiſh praiſe, but feel his misfortunes.

exulted

exulted in the ſtrength of the king. Many were the deaths of my arm; and diſmal was the gleam of my ſword. My locks were not then ſo gray; nor trembled my hands of age. My eyes were not cloſed in darkneſs; nor failed my feet in the race.

Who can relate the deaths of the people; or the deeds of mighty heroes; when Fingal, burning in his wrath, conſumed the ſons of Lochlin? Groans ſwelled on groans from hill to hill, till night had covered all. Pale, ſtaring like a herd of deer, the ſons of Lochlin convene on Lena.

We ſat and heard the ſprightly harp at Lubar's gentle ſtream. Fingal himſelf was next to the foe; and liſtened to the tales of bards. His godlike race were in the ſong, the chiefs of other times. Attentive, leaning on his ſhield, the king of Morven ſat. The wind whiſtled through his aged locks, and his thoughts are of the days of other years. Near him on his bending ſpear, my young, my lovely Oſcar ſtood. He admired the king of Morven: and his actions were ſwelling in his ſoul.

Son of my ſon, begun the king, O Oſcar, pride of youth, I ſaw the ſhining of thy ſword and gloried in my race. Purſue the glory of our fathers, and be what they have been; when Trenmor lived, the firſt of men, and Trathal the

the father of heroes. They fought the battle in their youth, and are the ſong of bards.——O Oſcar! bend the ſtrong in arms: but ſpare the feeble hand. Be thou a ſtream of many tides againſt the foes of thy people; but like the gale that moves the graſs to thoſe who aſk thine aid.——So Trenmor lived; ſuch Trathal was; and ſuch has Fingal been. My arm was the ſupport of the injured; and the weak reſted behind the lightning of my ſteel.

Oscar! I was young like thee, when lovely Fainaſóllis came: that ſun-beam! that mild light of love! the daughter of Craca's * king! I then returned from Cona's heath, and few were in my train. A white-ſailed boat appeared far off; we ſaw it like a miſt that rode on ocean's blaſt. It ſoon approached; we ſaw the fair. Her white breaſt heaved with ſighs. The wind was in her looſe dark hair; her roſy cheek had tears.——Daughter of beauty, calm I ſaid, what ſigh is in that breaſt? Can I, young as I am, defend thee, daughter of the ſea? My ſword is not unmatched in war, but dauntleſs is my heart.

* What the Craca here mentioned was, is not, at this diſtance of time, eaſy to determine. The moſt probable opinion is, that it was one of the Shetland iſles.—There is a ſtory concerning a daughter of the king of Craca in the ſixth book.

To

To thee I fly, with ſighs ſhe replied, O chief of mighty men! To thee I fly, chief of ſhells, ſupporter of the feeble hand! The king of Craca's echoing iſle owned me the ſun-beam of his race. And often did the hills of Cromala reply to the ſighs of love for the unhappy Fainaſóllis. Sora's chief beheld me fair; and loved the daughter of Craca. His ſword is like a beam of light upon the warrior's ſide. But dark is his brow; and tempeſts are in his ſoul. I ſhun him on the rolling ſea; but Sora's chief purſues.

Rest thou, I ſaid, behind my ſhield; reſt in peace, thou beam of light! The gloomy chief of Sora will fly, if Fingal's arm is like his ſoul. In ſome lone cave I might conceal thee, daughter of the ſea! But Fingal never flies; for where the danger threatens, I rejoice in the ſtorm of ſpears.——I ſaw the tears upon her cheek. I pitied Craca's fair.

Now, like a dreadful wave afar, appeared the ſhip of ſtormy Borbar. His maſts high-bended over the ſea behind their ſheets of ſnow. White roll the waters on either ſide. The ſtrength of ocean ſounds. Come thou, I ſaid, from the roar of ocean, thou rider of the ſtorm. Partake the feaſt within my hall. It is the houſe of ſtrangers.——The maid ſtood trembling by my

ſide; he drew the bow: ſhe fell. Unerring is thy hand, I ſaid, but feeble was the foe.—— We fought, nor weak was the ſtrife of death: He ſunk beneath my ſword. We laid them in two tombs of ſtones; the unhappy children of youth.

Such have I been in my youth, O Oſcar; be thou like the age of Fingal. Never ſeek the battle, nor ſhun it when it comes.——Fillan and Oſcar of the dark-brown hair; ye children of the race; fly over the heath of roaring winds; and view the ſons of Lochlin. Far off I hear the noiſe of their fear, like the ſtorms of echoing Cona. Go: that they may not fly my ſword along the waves of the north.——For many chiefs of Erin's race lie here on the dark bed of death. The children of the ſtorm are low; the ſons of echoing Cromla.

The heroes flew like two dark clouds; two dark clouds that are the chariots of ghoſts; when air's dark children come to frighten hapleſs men.

It was then that Gaul *, the ſon of Morni, ſtood like a rock in the night. His ſpear is glittering

* Gaul, the ſon of Morni, was chief of a tribe that diſputed long, the pre-eminence, with Fingal himſelf. They were reduced at laſt to obedience, and Gaul, from an enemy, turned Fingal's beſt friend and greateſt hero. His character is ſomething

glittering to the ſtars; his voice like many ſtreams.——Son of battle, cried the chief, O Fingal, king of ſhells! let the bards of many ſongs ſooth Erin's friends to reſt. And, Fingal, ſheath thy ſword of death; and let thy people fight. We wither away without our fame; for our king is the only breaker of ſhields. When morning riſes on our hills, behold at a diſtance our deeds. Let Lochlin feel the ſword of Morni's ſon, that bards may ſing of me. Such was the cuſtom heretofore of Fingal's noble race. Such was thine own, thou king of ſwords, in battles of the ſpear.

O son of Morni, Fingal replied, I glory in thy fame.——Fight; but my ſpear ſhall be near to aid thee in the midſt of danger. Raiſe, raiſe the voice, ſons of the ſong, and lull me into reſt. Here will Fingal lie amidſt the wind of night.——And if thou, Agandecca, art near, among the children of thy land; if thou ſitteſt on a blaſt of wind among the high-ſhrowded maſts of Lochlin; come to my dreams *, my fair one, and ſhew thy bright face to my ſoul.

thing like that of Ajax in the Iliad; a hero of more ſtrength than conduct in battle. He was very fond of military fame, and here he demands the next battle to himſelf.—The poet, by an artifice, removes Fingal, that his return may be the more magnificent.

* The poet prepares us for the dream of Fingal in the next book.

Many a voice and many a harp in tuneful ſounds aroſe. Of Fingal's noble deeds they ſung, and of the noble race of the hero. And ſometimes on the lovely ſound was heard the name of the now mournful Oſſian.

Often have I fought, and often won in battles of the ſpear. But blind, and tearful, and forlorn I now walk with little men. O Fingal, with thy race of battle I now behold thee not. The wild roes feed upon the green tomb of the mighty king of Morven.——Bleſt be thy ſoul, thou king of ſwords, thou moſt renowned on the hills of Cona!

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT to Book IV.

The action of the poem being suspended by night, Ossian takes that opportunity to relate his own actions at the lake of Lego, and his courtship of Evirallin, who was the mother of Oscar, and had died some time before the expedition of Fingal into Ireland. Her ghost appears to him, and tells him that Oscar, who had been sent, the beginning of the night, to observe the enemy, was engaged with an advanced party, and almost overpowered. Ossian relieves his son; and an alarm is given to Fingal of the approach of Swaran. The king rises, calls his army together, and, as he had promised the preceding night, devolves the command on Gaul the son of Morni, while he himself, after charging his sons to behave gallantly and defend his people, retires to a hill, from whence he could have a view of the battle. The battle joins; the poet relates Oscar's great actions. But when Oscar, in conjunction with his father, conquered in one wing, Gaul, who was attacked by Swaran in person, was on the point of retreating in the other. Fingal sends Ullin his bard to encourage him with a war song, but notwithstanding Swaran prevails; and Gaul and his army are obliged to give way. Fingal, descending from the hill, rallies them again: Swaran desists from the pursuit, possesses himself of a rising ground, restores the ranks, and waits the approach of Fingal. The king, having encouraged his men, gives the necessary orders, and renews the battle. Cuchullin, who, with his friend Connal, and Carril his bard, had retired to the cave of Tura, hearing the noise, came to the brow of the hill, which overlooked the field of battle, where he saw Fingal engaged with the enemy. He, being hindered by Connal from joining Fingal, who was himself upon the point of obtaining a complete victory, sends Carril to congratulate that hero on his success.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK IV*.

WHO comes with her ſongs from the mountain, like the bow of the ſhowery Lena? It is the maid of the voice of love. The white-armed daughter of Toſcar. Often haſt thou heard my ſong, and given the tear of beauty. Doſt thou come to the battles of thy people, and to hear the actions of Oſcar? When

* Fingal being aſleep, and the action ſuſpended by night, the poet introduces the ſtory of his courtſhip of Evirallin the daughter of Branno. The epiſode is neceſſary to clear up ſeveral paſſages that follow in the poem; at the ſame time that it naturally brings on the action of the book which, may be ſuppoſed to begin about the middle of the third night from the opening of the poem.—This book, as many of Oſſian's other compoſitions, is addreſſed to the beautiful Malvina the daughter of Toſcar. She appears to have been in love with Oſcar, and to have affected the company of the father after the death of the ſon.

ſhall I ceaſe to mourn by the ſtreams of the echoing Cona? My years have paſſed away in battle, and my age is darkened with ſorrow.

Daughter of the hand of ſnow! I was not ſo mournful and blind; I was not ſo dark and forlorn when Everallin loved me. Everallin with the dark-brown hair, the white-boſomed love of Cormac. A thouſand heroes fought the maid, ſhe denied her love to a thouſand; the ſons of the ſword were deſpiſed; for graceful in her eyes was Oſſian.

I went in ſuit of the maid to Lego's ſable ſurge; twelve of my people were there, the ſons of the ſtreamy Morven. We came to Branno friend of ſtrangers: Branno of the ſounding mail.——From whence, he ſaid, are the arms of ſteel? Not eaſy to win is the maid that has denied the blue-eyed ſons of Erin. But bleſt be thou, O ſon of Fingal, happy is the maid that waits thee. Tho' twelve daughters of beauty were mine, thine were the choice, thou ſon of fame!——Then he opened the hall of the maid, the dark-haired Everallin. Joy kindled in our breaſts of ſteel and bleſt the maid of Branno.

Above us on the hill appeared the people of ſtately Cormac. Eight were the heroes of the chief; and the heath flamed with their arms. There Colla, Durra of the wounds, there mighty Toſcar,

Toſcar, and Tago, there Freſtal the victorious ſtood; Dairo of the happy deeds, and Dala the battle's bulwark in the narrow way.——The ſword flamed in the hand of Cormac, and graceful was the look of the hero.

Eight were the heroes of Oſſian; Ullin ſtormy ſon of war; Mullo of the generous deeds; the noble, the graceful Scelacha; Oglan, and Cerdal the wrathful, and Duma-riccan's brows of death. And why ſhould Ogar be the laſt; ſo wide renowned on the hills of Ardven?

Ogar met Dala the ſtrong, face to face, on the field of heroes. The battle of the chiefs was like the wind on ocean's foamy waves. The dagger is remembered by Ogar; the weapon which he loved; nine times he drowned it in Dala's ſide. The ſtormy battle turned. Three times I pierced Cormac's ſhield: three times he broke his ſpear. But, unhappy youth of love! I cut his head away.——Five times I ſhook it by the lock. The friends of Cormac fled.

Whoever would have told me, lovely maid*, when then I ſtrove in battle; that blind, forſaken, and forlorn I now ſhould paſs the night; firm ought his mail to have been, and unmatched his arm in battle.

* The poet addreſſes himſelf to Malvina the daughter of Toſcar.

Now

Now * on Lena's gloomy heath the voice of muſic died away. The unconſtant blaſt blew hard, and the high oak ſhook its leaves around me; of Everallin were my thoughts, when ſhe, in all the light of beauty, and her blue eyes rolling in tears, ſtood on a cloud before my ſight, and ſpoke with feeble voice.

O Ossian, riſe and ſave my ſon; ſave Oſcar chief of men, near the red oak of Lubar's ſtream, he fights with Lochlin's ſons.——She ſunk into her cloud again. I clothed me with my ſteel. My ſpear ſupported my ſteps, and my rattling armour rung. I hummed, as I was wont in danger, the ſongs of heroes of old. Like diſtant thunder † Lochlin heard; they fled; my ſon purſued.

* The poet returns to his ſubject. If one could fix the time of the year in which the action of the poem happened, from the ſcene deſcribed here, I ſhould be tempted to place it in autumn. —The trees ſhed their leaves, and the winds are variable, both which circumſtances agree with that ſeaſon of the year.

† Oſſian gives the reader a high idea of himſelf. His very ſong frightens the enemy. This paſſage reſembles one in the eighteenth Iliad, where the voice of Achilles frightens the Trojans from the body of Patroclus.

> Forth march'd the chief, and diſtant from the crowd
> High on the rampart rais'd his voice aloud.
> So high his brazen voice the hero rear'd,
> Hoſts drop their arms and trembled as they fear'd.
>
> Pope.

I called

I called him like a diſtant ſtream. My ſon return over Lena. No further purſue the foe, though Oſſian is behind thee.——He came; and lovely in my ear was Oſcar's ſounding ſteel. Why didſt thou ſtop my hand, he ſaid, till death had covered all? For dark and dreadful by the ſtream they met thy ſon and Fillan. They watched the terrors of the night. Our ſwords have conquered ſome. But as the winds of night pour the ocean over the white ſands of Mora, ſo dark advance the ſons of Lochlin over Lena's ruſtling heath. The ghoſts of night ſhrick afar; and I have ſeen the meteors of death. Let me awake the king of Morven, he that ſmiles in danger; for he is like the ſon of heaven that riſes in a ſtorm.

Fingal had ſtarted from a dream, and leaned on Trenmor's ſhield; the dark-brown ſhield of his fathers; which they had lifted of old in the battles of their race.——The hero had ſeen in his reſt the mournful form of Agandecca; ſhe came from the way of the ocean, and ſlowly, lonely, moved over Lena. Her face was pale like the miſt of Cromla; and dark were the tears of her cheek. She often raiſed her dim hand from her robe; her robe which was of the clouds of the deſart: ſhe raiſed her dim hand over Fingal, and turned away her ſilent eyes.

Why

Why weeps the daughter of Starno, said Fingal, with a sigh? Why is thy face so pale, thou daughter of the clouds?——She departed on the wind of Lena; and left him in the midst of the night.——She mourned the sons of her people that were to fall by Fingal's hand.

The hero started from rest, and still beheld her in his soul.——The sound of Oscar's steps approached. The king saw the grey shield on his side. For the faint beam of the morning came over the waters of Ullin.

What do the foes in their fear? said the rising king of Morven. Or fly they through ocean's foam, or wait they the battle of steel? But why should Fingal ask? I hear their voice on the early wind.---Fly over Lena's heath, O Oscar, and awake our friends to battle.

The king stood by the stone of Lubar; and thrice raised his terrible voice. The deer started from the fountains of Cromla; and all the rocks shook on their hills. Like the noise of a hundred mountain-streams, that burst, and roar, and foam: like the clouds that gather to a tempest on the blue face of the sky; so met the sons of the desart, round the terrible voice of Fingal. For pleasant was the voice of the king of Morven to the warriors of his land: often had

he

he led them to battle, and returned with the ſpoils of the foe.

Come to battle, ſaid the king, ye children of the ſtorm. Come to the death of thouſands. Comhal's ſon will ſee the fight.——My ſword ſhall wave on that hill, and be the ſhield of my people. But never may you need it, warriors; while the ſon of Morni fights, the chief of mighty men.——He ſhall lead my battle; that his fame may riſe in the ſong.——O ye ghoſts of heroes dead! ye riders of the ſtorm of Cromla! receive my falling people with joy, and bring them to your hills.---And may the blaſt of Lena carry them over my ſeas, that they may come to my ſilent dreams, and delight my ſoul in reſt.

Fillan and Oſcar, of the dark-brown hair! fair Ryno, with the pointed ſteel! advance with valour to the fight; and behold the ſon of Morni. Let your ſwords be like his in the ſtrife: and behold the deeds of his hands. Protect the friends of your father: and remember the chiefs of old. My children, I ſhall ſee you yet, though here ye ſhould fall in Erin. Soon ſhall our cold, pale ghoſts meet in a cloud, and fly over the hills of Cona.

Now like a dark and ſtormy cloud, edged round with the red lightning of heaven, and

flying

flying weſtward from the morning's beam, the king of hills removed. Terrible is the light of his armour, and two ſpears are in his hand.——His gray hair falls on the wind.——He often looks back on the war. Three bards attend the ſon of fame, to carry his words to the heroes.——High on Cromla's ſide he ſat, waving the lightning of his ſword, and as he waved we moved.

Joy roſe in Oſcar's face. His cheek is red. His eye ſheds tears. The ſword is a beam of fire in his hand. He came, and ſmiling, ſpoke to Oſſian.——O ruler of the fight of ſteel! my father, hear thy ſon. Retire with Morven's mighty chief; and give me Oſſian's fame. And if here I fall; my king, remember that breaſt of ſnow, that lonely ſun-beam of my love, the white-handed daughter of Toſcar. For with red cheek from the rock, and bending over the ſtream, her ſoft hair flies about her boſom as ſhe pours the ſigh for Oſcar. Tell her I am on my hills a lightly-bounding ſon of the wind; that hereafter, in a cloud, I may meet the lovely maid of Toſcar.

Raise, Oſcar, rather raiſe my tomb. I will not yield the fight to thee. For firſt and bloodieſt in the war my arm ſhall teach thee how to fight. But, remember, my ſon, to place this ſword, this bow, and the horn of my deer,

deer, within that dark and narrow houſe, whoſe mark is one gray ſtone. Oſcar, I have no love to leave to the care of my ſon; for graceful Evirallin is no more, the lovely daughter of Branno.

Such were our words, when Gaul's loud voice came growing on the wind. He waved on high the ſword of his father, and ruſhed to death and wounds.

As waves white-bubbling over the deep come ſwelling, roaring on; as rocks of ooze meet roaring waves: ſo foes attacked and fought. Man met with man, and ſteel with ſteel. Shields ſound; men fall. As a hundred hammers on the ſon of the furnace, ſo roſe, ſo rung their ſwords.

Gaul ruſhed on like a whirlwind in Ardven. The deſtruction of heroes is on his ſword. Swaran was like the fire of the deſart in the echoing heath of Gormal. How can I give to the ſong the death of many ſpears? My ſword roſe high, and flamed in the ſtrife of blood. And, Oſcar, terrible wert thou, my beſt, my greateſt ſon! I rejoiced in my ſecret ſoul, when his ſword flamed over the ſlain. They fled amain through Lena's heath: and we purſued and ſlew. As ſtones that bound from rock to rock; as axes in echoing woods; as thunder

rolls from hill to hill in dismal broken peals; so blow succeeded to blow, and death to death, from the hand of Oscar * and mine.

But Swaran closed round Morni's son, as the strength of the tide of Inistore. The king half-rose from his hill at the sight, and half-assumed the spear. Go, Ullin, go, my aged bard, begun the king of Morven. Remind the mighty Gaul of battle; remind him of his fathers. Support the yielding fight with song; for song enlivens war. Tall Ullin went, with steps of age, and spoke to the king of swords.

Son † of the chief of generous steeds! high-bounding king of spears. Strong arm in every perilous toil. Hard heart that never yields. Chief of the pointed arms of death. Cut down the foe; let no white sail bound round dark

* Ossian never fails to give a fine character of his beloved son. His speech to his father is that of a hero; it contains the submission due to a parent, and the warmth that becomes a young warrior. There is a propriety in dwelling here on the actions of Oscar, as the beautiful Malvina, to whom the book is addressed, was in love with that hero.

† The war-song of Ullin varies from the rest of the poem in the versification. It runs down like a torrent; and consists almost intirely of epithets. The custom of encouraging men in battle with extempore rhymes, has been carried down almost to our own times. Several of these war-songs are extant, but the most of them are only a group of epithets, without beauty or harmony, utterly destitute of poetical merit.

Inistore.

Iniſtore. Be thine arm like thunder. Thine eyes like fire, thy heart of ſolid rock. Whirl round thy ſword as a meteor at night, and lift thy ſhield like the flame of death. Son of the chief of generous ſteeds, cut down the foe; deſtroy.——The hero's heart beat high. But Swaran came with battle. He cleft the ſhield of Gaul in twain; and the ſons of the deſart fled.

Now Fingal aroſe in his might, and thrice he reared his voice. Cromla anſwered around, and the ſons of the deſart ſtood ſtill.——They bent their red faces to earth, aſhamed at the preſence of Fingal. He came like a cloud of rain in the days of the ſun, when ſlow it rolls on the hill, and fields expect the ſhower. Swaran beheld the terrible king of Morven, and ſtopped in the midſt of his courſe. Dark he leaned on his ſpear, rolling his red eyes around. Silent and tall he ſeemed as an oak on the banks of Lubar, which had its branches blaſted of old by the lightning of heaven. It bends over the ſtream, and the gray moſs whiſtles in the wind: ſo ſtood the king. Then ſlowly he retired to the riſing heath of Lena. His thouſands pour around the hero, and the darkneſs of battle gathers on the hill.

Fingal, like a beam from heaven, ſhone in the midſt of his people. His heroes gather

around him, and he ſends forth the voice of his power. Raiſe my ſtandards * on high,---ſpread them on Lena's wind, like the flames of an hundred hills. Let them ſound on the winds of Erin, and remind us of the fight. Ye ſons of the roaring ſtreams, that pour from a thouſand hills, be near the king of Morven: attend to the words of his power. Gaul ſtrongeſt arm of death! O Oſcar, of the future fights; Connal, ſon of the blue ſteel of Sora; Dermid of the dark-brown hair, and Oſſian king of many ſongs, be near your father's arm.

We reared the ſun-beam † of battle; the ſtandard of the king. Each hero's ſoul exulted with joy, as, waving, it flew on the wind. It was ſtudded with gold above, as the blue wide ſhell of the nightly ſky. Each hero had his ſtandard too; and each his gloomy men.

Behold, ſaid the king of generous ſhells, how Lochlin divides on Lena.——They ſtand like broken clouds on the hill, or an half conſumed grove of oaks; when we ſee the ſky through

* Th' imperial enſign, which full high advanc'd,
Shone like a meteor ſtreaming to the wind.
Milton.

† Fingal's ſtandard was diſtinguiſhed by the name of *ſun-beam*; probably on account of its bright colour, and its being ſtudded with gold. To begin a battle is expreſſed, in old compoſition, by *lifting of the ſun-beam*.

its

its branches, and the meteor paſſing behind. Let every chief among the friends of Fingal take a dark troop of thoſe that frown ſo high; nor let a ſon of the echoing groves bound on the waves of Iniſtore.

Mine, ſaid Gaul, be the ſeven chiefs that came from Lano's lake.——Let Iniſtore's dark king, ſaid Oſcar, come to the ſword of Oſſian's ſon.——To mine the king of Iniſcon, ſaid Connal, heart of ſteel! Or Mudan's chief or I, ſaid brown-haired Dermid, ſhall ſleep on clay-cold earth. My choice, though now ſo weak and dark, was Terman's battling king; I promiſed with my hand to win the hero's dark-brown ſhield.——Bleſt and victorious be my chiefs, ſaid Fingal of the mildeſt look; Swaran, king of roaring waves, thou art the choice of Fingal.

Now, like an hundred different winds that pour through many vales; divided, dark, the ſons of the hill advanced, and Cromla echoed around.

How can I relate the deaths when we cloſed in the ſtrife of our ſteel? O daughter of Toſcar! bloody were our hands! The gloomy ranks of Lochlin fell like the banks of the roaring Cona.——Our arms were victorious on Lena; each chief fulfilled his promiſe. Beſide the murmur of Branno thou didſt often ſit, O

maid; when thy white boſom roſe frequent, like the down of the ſwan when ſlow ſhe ſails the lake, and ſidelong winds are blowing.——Thou haſt ſeen the ſun * retire red and ſlow behind his cloud; night gathering round on the mountain, while the unfrequent blaſt † roared in narrow vales. At length the rain beats hard; and thunder rolls in peals. Lightning glances on the rocks. Spirits ride on beams of fire. And

* *Sol quoque & exoriens & cum ſe condit in undas*
Signa dabit. Solem certiſſima ſigna ſequuntur,
Ut quæ mane refert, & quæ ſurgentibus aſtris.
Ille ubi naſcentem maculis variaverit ortum
Conditus in nubem, medioque refugerit orbe;
Suſpecti tibi ſunt imbres. VIRG.

Above the reſt the ſun, who never lies,
Foretels the change of weather in the ſkies.
For if he riſe, unwilling to his race,
Clouds on his brow and ſpots upon his face;
Or if thro' miſts he ſhoots his ſullen beams,
Frugal of light, in looſe and ſtraggling ſtreams,
Suſpect a driſling day. DRYDEN.

† *Continuo ventis ſurgentibus aut freta ponti*
Incipiunt agitata tumeſcere; & aridus altis
Montibus audiri fragor, aut reſonantia longe
Littora miſceri, & nemorum increbeſcere murmur.
VIRG.

For ere the riſing winds begin to roar,
The working ſeas advance to waſh the ſhore;
Soft whiſpers run along the leafy wood,
And mountains whiſtle to the murm'ring flood.
DRYDEN.

the

the ſtrength of the mountain-ſtreams * comes roaring down the hills. Such was the noiſe of battle, maid of the arms of ſnow. Why, daughter of the hill, that tear? the maids of Lochlin have cauſe to weep. The people of their country fell, for bloody was the blue ſteel of the race of my heroes. But I am ſad, forlorn, and blind; and no more the companion of heroes. Give, lovely maid, to me thy tears, for I have ſeen the tombs of all my friends.

It was then by Fingal's hand a hero fell, to his grief.——Gray-haired he rolled in the duſt, and lifted his faint eyes to the king. And is it by me thou haſt fallen, ſaid the ſon of Comhal, thou friend of Agandecca! I ſaw thy tears for the maid of my love in the halls of the bloody Starno. Thou haſt been the foe of the foes of my love, and haſt thou fallen by my hand? Raiſe, Ullin, raiſe the grave of the ſon of Mathon; and give his name to the ſong of Agandecca; for dear to my ſoul haſt thou been, thou darkly-dwelling maid of Ardven.

‡ ——*ruunt de montibus amnes.* Virg.

The rapid rains, deſcending from the hills,
To rolling torrents ſwell the creeping rills.

Dryden.

Cuchullin, from the cave of Cromla, heard the noiſe of the troubled war. He called to Connal chief of ſwords, and Carril of other times. The gray-haired heroes heard his voice, and took their aſpen ſpears. They came, and ſaw the tide of battle, like the crowded waves of the ocean; when the dark wind blows from the deep, and rolls the billows through the ſandy vale.

Cuchullin kindled at the fight, and darkneſs gathered on his brow. His hand is on the ſword of his fathers: his red-rolling eyes on the foe. He thrice attempted to ruſh to battle, and thrice did Connal ſtop him. Chief of the iſle of miſt, he ſaid, Fingal ſubdues the foe. Seek not a part of the fame of the king; himſelf is like a ſtorm.

Then, Carril, go, replied the chief, and greet the king of Morven. When Lochlin falls away like a ſtream after rain, and the noiſe of the battle is over, then be thy voice ſweet in his ear to praiſe the king of ſwords. Give him the ſword of Caithbat; for Cuchullin is worthy no more to lift the arms of his fathers.

But, O ye ghoſts of the lonely Cromla! ye ſouls of chiefs that are no more! be ye the companions of Cuchullin, and talk to him in the cave of his ſorrow. For never more ſhall I be renowned

renowned among the mighty in the land. I am like a beam that has ſhone; like a miſt that fled away, when the blaſt of the morning came, and brightened the ſhaggy ſide of the hill. Connal, talk of arms no more: departed is my fame.---My ſighs ſhall be on Cromla's wind, till my footſteps ceaſe to be ſeen.——And thou, white-boſom'd Bragela, mourn over the fall of my fame; for, vanquiſhed, I will never return to thee, thou ſun-beam of Dunſcaich.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK V.

ARGUMENT to Book V.

Cuchullin and Connal ſtill remain on the hill. Fingal and Swaran meet; the combat is deſcribed. Swaran is overcome, bound and delivered over as a priſoner to the care of Oſſian and Gaul the ſon of Morni; Fingal, his younger ſons, and Oſcar, ſtill purſue the enemy. The epiſode of Orla a chief of Lochlin, who was mortally wounded in the battle, is introduced. Fingal, touched with the death of Orla, orders the purſuit to be diſcontinued; and calling his ſons together, he is informed that Ryno, the youngeſt of them, was killed. He laments his death, hears the ſtory of Lamdarg and Gelchoſſa, and returns towards the place where he had left Swaran. Carril, who had been ſent by Cuchullin to congratulate Fingal on his victory, comes in the mean time to Oſſian. The converſation of the two poets cloſes the action of the fourth day.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK V*.

NOW Connal, on Cromla's windy ſide, ſpoke to the chief of the noble car. Why that gloom, ſon of Semo? Our friends are the mighty in battle. And renowned art thou, O warrior! many were the deaths of thy ſteel. Often has Bragela met with blue-rolling eyes of

* The fourth day ſtill continues. The poet by putting the narration in the mouth of Connal, who ſtill remained with Cuchullin on the ſide of Cromla, gives propriety to the praiſes of Fingal. The beginning of this book, in the original, is one of the moſt beautiful parts of the poem. The verſification is regular and full, and agrees very well with the ſedate character of Connal.——No poet has adapted the cadence of his verſe more to the temper of the ſpeaker, than Oſſian has done. It is more than probable that the whole poem was originally deſigned to be ſung to the harp, as the verſification is ſo various, and ſo much ſuited to the different paſſions of the human mind.

joy,

joy, often has ſhe met her hero, returning in the midſt of the valiant; when his ſword was red with ſlaughter, and his foes ſilent in the fields of the tomb. Pleaſant to her ears were thy bards, when thine actions roſe in the ſong.

But behold the king of Morven; he moves below like a pillar of fire. His ſtrength is like the ſtream of Lubar, or the wind of the echoing Cromla; when the branchy foreſts of night are overturned.

Happy are thy people, O Fingal, thine arm ſhall fight their battles: thou art the firſt in their dangers; the wiſeſt in the days of their peace. Thou ſpeakeſt and thy thouſands obey; and armies tremble at the ſound of thy ſteel. Happy are thy people, Fingal, chief of the lonely hills.

Who is that ſo dark and terrible, coming in the thunder of his courſe? who is it but Starno's ſon to meet the king of Morven? Behold the battle of the chiefs: it is like the ſtorm of the ocean, when two ſpirits meet far diſtant, and contend for the rolling of the wave. The hunter hears the noiſe on his hill; and ſees the high billows advancing to Ardven's ſhore.

Such were the words of Connal, when the heroes met in the midſt of their falling people. There was the clang of arms! there every blow, like

like the hundred hammers of the furnace! Terrible is the battle of the kings, and horrid the look of their eyes. Their dark-brown ſhields are cleft in twain; and their ſteel flies, broken, from their helmets. They fling their weapons down. Each ruſhes * to the graſp of his foe. Their ſinewy arms bend round each other: they turn from ſide to ſide, and ſtrain and ſtretch their large ſpreading limbs below. But when the pride of their ſtrength aroſe, they ſhook the hill with their heels; rocks tumble from their places on high; the green-headed buſhes are overturned. At length the ſtrength of Swaran fell; and the king of the groves is bound.

Thus have I ſeen on Cona; (but Cona I behold no more) thus have I ſeen two dark hills removed from their place by the ſtrength of the burſting ſtream. They turn from ſide to ſide, and their tall oaks meet one another on high. Then they fall together with all their rocks and

* This paſſage reſembles one in the twenty-third Iliad.

Cloſe lock'd above their heads and arms are mixt;
Below their planted feet at diſtance fixt;
Now to the graſp each manly body bends;
The humid ſweat from ev'ry pore deſcends;
Their bones reſound with blows: ſides, ſhoulders, thighs,
Swell to each gripe, and bloody tumours riſe.

Pope.

trees,

trees. The ſtreams are turned by their ſides; and the red ruin is ſeen afar.

Sons of the king of Morven, ſaid the noble Fingal, guard the king of Lochlin; for he is ſtrong as his thouſand waves. His hand is taught to the battle, and his race of the times of old. Gaul, thou firſt of my heroes, and Oſſian king of ſongs, attend the friend of Agandecca, and raiſe to joy his grief.——But, Oſcar, Fillan, and Ryno, ye children of the race! purſue the reſt of Lochlin over the heath of Lena; that no veſſel may hereafter bound on the dark-rolling waves of Iniſtore.

They flew like lightning over the heath. He ſlowly moved as a cloud of thunder when the ſultry plain of ſummer is ſilent. His ſword is before him as a ſun-beam, terrible as the ſtreaming meteor of night. He came toward a chief of Lochlin, and ſpoke to the ſon of the wave.

Who is that like a cloud at the rock of the roaring ſtream? He cannot bound over its courſe; yet ſtately is the chief! his boſſy ſhield is on his ſide; and his ſpear like the tree of the deſart. Youth of the dark-brown hair, art thou of Fingal's foes?

I am a ſon of Lochlin, he cries, and ſtrong is my arm in war. My ſpouſe is weeping at home, but Orla * will never return.

Or fights or yields the hero, ſaid Fingal of the noble deeds? foes do not conquer in my preſence: but my friends are renowned in the hall. Son of the wave, follow me, partake the feaſt of my ſhells, and purſue the deer of my deſart.

No: ſaid the hero, I aſſiſt the feeble: my ſtrength ſhall remain with the weak in arms. My ſword has been always unmatched, O warrior: let the king of Morven yield.

I never yielded, Orla, Fingal never yielded to man. Draw thy ſword and chuſe thy foe. Many are my heroes.

And does the king refuſe the combat, ſaid Orla of the dark-brown hair? Fingal is a match for Orla: and he alone of all his race.——But, king of Morven, if I ſhall fall; (as one time the warrior muſt die;) raiſe my tomb in the midſt, and let it be the greateſt on Lena. And ſend, over the dark-blue wave, the ſword of

* The ſtory of Orla is ſo beautiful and affecting in the original, that many are in poſſeſſion of it in the north of Scotland, who never heard a ſyllable more of the poem. It varies the action, and awakes the attention of the reader when he expected nothing but languor in the conduct of the poem, as the great action was over in the conqueſt of Swaran.

Orla

Orla to the ſpouſe of his love; that ſhe may ſhew it to her ſon, with tears, to kindle his ſoul to war.

Son of the mournful tale, ſaid Fingal, why doſt thou awaken my tears? One day the warriors muſt die, and the children ſee their uſeleſs arms in the hall. But, Orla, thy tomb ſhall riſe, and thy white-boſomed ſpouſe weep over thy ſword.

They fought on the heath of Lena, but feeble was the arm of Orla. The ſword of Fingal deſcended, and cleft his ſhield in twain. It fell and glittered on the ground, as the moon on the ſtream of night.

King of Morven, ſaid the hero, lift thy ſword, and pierce my breaſt. Wounded and faint from battle my friends have left me here. The mournful tale ſhall come to my love on the banks of the ſtreamy Loda; when ſhe is alone in the wood; and the ruſtling blaſt in the leaves.

No; ſaid the king of Morven, I will never wound thee, Orla. On the banks of Loda let her ſee thee eſcaped from the hands of war. Let thy gray-haired father, who, perhaps, is blind with age, hear the ſound of thy voice in his hall.——With joy let the hero riſe, and ſearch for his ſon with his hands.

But

But never will he find him, Fingal; ſaid the youth of the ſtreamy Loda.——On Lena's heath I ſhall die; and foreign bards will talk of me. My broad belt covers my wound of death. And now I give it to the wind.

The dark blood poured from his ſide, he fell pale on the heath of Lena. Fingal bends over him as he dies, and calls his younger heroes.

Oscar and Fillan, my ſons, raiſe high the memory of Orla. Here let the dark-haired hero reſt far from the ſpouſe of his love. Here let him reſt in his narrow houſe far from the ſound of Loda. The ſons of the feeble will find his bow at home, but will not be able to bend it. His faithful dogs howl on his hills, and his boars, which he uſed to purſue, rejoice. Fallen is the arm of battle; the mighty among the valiant is low!

Exalt the voice, and blow the horn, ye ſons of the king of Morven: let us go back to Swaran, and ſend the night away on ſong. Fillan, Oſcar, and Ryno, fly over the heath of Lena. Where, Ryno, art thou, young ſon of fame? Thou art not wont to be the laſt to anſwer thy father.

Ryno, ſaid Ullin firſt of bards, is with the awful forms of his fathers. With Trathal king of ſhields, and Trenmor of the mighty deeds.

The youth is low,---the youth is pale,---he lies on Lena's heath.

And fell the ſwifteſt in the race, ſaid the king, the firſt to bend the bow? Thou ſcarce haſt been known to me: why did young Ryno fall? But ſleep thou ſoftly on Lena, Fingal ſhall ſoon behold thee. Soon ſhall my voice be heard no more, and my footſteps ceaſe to be ſeen. The bards will tell of Fingal's name; the ſtones will talk of me. But, Ryno, thou art low indeed, ——thou haſt not received thy fame. Ullin, ſtrike the harp for Ryno; tell what the chief would have been. Farewel, thou firſt in every field. No more ſhall I direct thy dart. Thou that haſt been ſo fair; I behold thee not---Farewel.

The tear is on the cheek of the king; for terrible was his ſon in war. His ſon! that was like a beam of fire by night on the hill; when the foreſts ſink down in its courſe, and the traveller trembles at the ſound.

Whose fame is in that dark-green tomb, begun the king of generous ſhells? four ſtones with their heads of moſs ſtand there; and mark the narrow houſe of death. Near it let my Ryno reſt, and be the neighbour of the valiant. Perhaps ſome chief of fame is here to fly with my ſon on clouds. O Ullin, raiſe the ſongs of other

other times. Bring to memory the dark dwellers of the tomb. If in the field of the valiant they never fled from danger, my ſon ſhall reſt with them, far from his friends, on the heath of Lena.

Here, ſaid the mouth of the ſong, here reſt the firſt of heroes. Silent is Lamderg * in this tomb, and Ullin king of ſwords. And who, ſoft ſmiling from her cloud, ſhews me her face of love? Why, daughter, why ſo pale art thou, firſt of the maids of Cromla? Doſt thou ſleep with the foes in battle, Gelchoſſa, white-boſomed daughter of Tuathal?——Thou haſt been the love of thouſands, but Lamderg was thy love. He came to Selma's moſſy towers, and, ſtriking his dark buckler, ſpoke:

Where is Gelchoſſa, my love, the daughter of the noble Tuathal? I left her in the hall of Selma, when I fought with the gloomy Ulfadda. Return ſoon, O Lamderg, ſhe ſaid, for here I am in the midſt of ſorrow. Her white breaſt roſe with ſighs. Her cheek was wet with tears. But I ſee her not coming to meet me; and to ſooth my ſoul after battle. Silent is the hall of my joy; I hear not the voice of the bard.---

* Lamh-dhearg ſignifies *bloody hand*. Gelchoſſa, *white legged*. Tuathal, *ſurly*. Ulfadda, *long-beard*. Ferchios, *the conqueror of men*.

Bran * does not ſhake his chains at the gate, glad at the coming of Lamderg. Where is Gelchoſſa, my love, the mild daughter of the generous Tuathal?

Lamderg! ſays Ferchios the ſon of Aidon, Gelchoſſa may be on Cromla; ſhe and the maids of the bow purſuing the flying deer.

Ferchios! replied the chief of Cromla, no noiſe meets the ear of Lamderg. No ſound is in the woods of Lena. No deer fly in my ſight. No panting dog purſues. I ſee not Gelchoſſa my love, fair as the full moon ſetting on the hills of Cromla. Go, Ferchios, go to Allad † the gray-haired ſon of the rock. His dwelling is in the circle of ſtones. He may know of Gelchoſſa.

The ſon of Aidon went; and ſpoke to the ear of age. Allad! thou that dwelleſt in the rock, thou that trembleſt alone, what ſaw thine eyes of age?

* Bran is a common name of gray-hounds to this day. It is a cuſtom in the north of Scotland, to give the names of the heroes mentioned in this poem, to their dogs; a proof that they are familiar to the ear, and their fame generally known.

† Allad is plainly a druid: he is called the ſon of the rock, from his dwelling in a cave; and the circle of ſtones here mentioned is the pale of the druidical temple. He is here conſulted as one who had a ſupernatural knowledge of things; from the druids, no doubt, came the ridiculous notion of the ſecond ſight, which prevailed in the highlands and iſles.

I SAW

I SAW, anſwered Allad the old, Ullin the ſon of Cairbar. He came like a cloud from Cromla; and he hummed a ſurly ſong like a blaſt in a leafleſs wood. He entered the hall of Selma. ——Lamderg, he ſaid, moſt dreadful of men, fight or yield to Ullin. Lamderg, replied Gelchoſſa, the ſon of battle, is not here. He fights Ulfadda mighty chief. He is not here, thou firſt of men. But Lamderg never yielded. He will fight the ſon of Cairbar.

LOVELY art thou, ſaid terrible Ullin, daughter of the generous Tuathal. I carry thee to Cairbar's halls. The valiant ſhall have Gelchoſſa. Three days I remain on Cromla, to wait that ſon of battle, Lamderg. On the fourth Gelchoſſa is mine, if the mighty Lamderg flies.

ALLAD! ſaid the chief of Cromla, peace to thy dreams in the cave. Ferchios, ſound the horn of Lamderg that Ullin may hear on Cromla. Lamderg *, like a roaring ſtorm, aſcended the hill from Selma. He hummed a ſurly ſong as he went, like the noiſe of a falling ſtream. He ſtood like a cloud on the hill, that varies its form to the wind. He rolled a ſtone,

* The reader will find this paſſage altered from what it was in the fragments of ancient poetry.——It is delivered down very differently by tradition, and the tranſlator has choſen that reading which favours leaſt of bombaſt.

the ſign of war. Ullin heard in Cairbar's hall. The hero heard, with joy, his foe, and took his father's ſpear. A ſmile brightens his dark-brown cheek, as he places his ſword by his ſide. The dagger glittered in his hand. He whiſtled as he went.

Gelchossa ſaw the ſilent chief, as a wreath of miſt aſcending the hill.——She ſtruck her white and heaving breaſt; and ſilent, tearful, feared for Lamderg.

Cairbar, hoary chief of ſhells, ſaid the maid of the tender hand; I muſt bend the bow on Cromla; for I ſee the dark-brown hinds.

She haſted up the hill. In vain! the gloomy heroes fought.——Why ſhould I tell the king of Morven how wrathful heroes fight!——Fierce Ullin fell. Young Lamderg came all pale to the daughter of generous Tuathal.

What blood, my love, the ſoft-haired woman ſaid, what blood runs down my warrior's ſide?——It is Ullin's blood, the chief replied, thou fairer than the ſnow of Cromla! Gelchoſſa, let me reſt here a little while. The mighty Lamderg died.

And ſleepeſt thou ſo ſoon on earth, O chief of ſhady Cromla? three days ſhe mourned beſide her love. —— The hunters found her dead. They raiſed this tomb above the three. Thy

ſon, O king of Morven, may reſt here with heroes.

And here my ſon ſhall reſt, ſaid Fingal, the noiſe of their fame has reached my ears. Fillan and Fergus! bring hither Orla; the pale youth of the ſtream of Loda. Not unequalled ſhall Ryno lie in earth when Orla is by his ſide. Weep, ye daughters of Morven; and ye maids of the ſtreamy Loda. Like a tree they grew on the hills; and they have fallen like the oak * of the deſart; when it lies acroſs a ſtream, and withers in the wind of the mountain.

Oscar! chief of every youth! thou ſeeſt how they have fallen. Be thou, like them, on earth renowned. Like them the ſong of bards. Terrible were their forms in battle; but calm was Ryno in the days of peace. He was like the bow of the ſhower ſeen far diſtant on the ſtream; when the ſun is ſetting on Mora, and ſilence on the hill of deer. Reſt, youngeſt of my ſons, reſt, O Ryno, on Lena. We too ſhall be no more; for the warrior one day muſt fall.

* —ὡ ὅτε τις δρῦς ἤριπεν— Hom. Il. 16.

———as the mountain oak
Nods to the ax, till with a groaning ſound
It ſinks, and ſpreads its honours on the ground.

Pope.

Such was thy grief, thou king of hills, when Ryno lay on earth. What muſt the grief of Oſſian be, for thou thyſelf art gone. I hear not thy diſtant voice on Cona. My eyes perceive thee not. Often forlorn and dark I ſit at thy tomb; and feel it with my hands. When I think I hear thy voice; it is but the blaſt of the deſart.——Fingal has long ſince fallen aſleep, the ruler of the war.

Then Gaul and Oſſian ſat with Swaran on the ſoft green banks of Lubar. I touched the harp to pleaſe the king. But gloomy was his brow. He rolled his red eyes towards Lena. The hero mourned his people.

I lifted my eyes to Cromla, and I ſaw the ſon of generous Semo.——Sad and ſlow he retired from his hill towards the lonely cave of Tura. He ſaw Fingal victorious, and mixed his joy with grief. The ſun is bright on his armour, and Connal ſlowly followed. They ſunk behind the hill like two pillars of the fire of night: when winds purſue them over the mountain, and the flaming heath reſounds. Beſide a ſtream of roaring foam his cave is in a rock. One tree bends above it; and the ruſhing winds echo againſt its ſides. Here reſts the chief of Dunſcaich, the ſon of generous Semo. His thoughts are on the battle he loſt; and the tear

is

is on his cheek. He mourned the departure of his fame that fled like the mist of Cona. O Bragela, thou art too far remote to cheer the soul of the hero. But let him see thy bright form in his soul; that his thoughts may return to the lonely sun-beam of Dunscaich.

Who comes with the locks of age? It is the son of songs. Hail, Carril of other times, thy voice is like the harp in the halls of Tura. Thy words are pleasant as the shower that falls on the fields of the sun. Carril of the times of old, why comest thou from the son of the generous Semo?

Ossian king of swords, replied the bard, thou best raisest the song. Long hast thou been known to Carril, thou ruler of battles. Often have I touched the harp to lovely Evirallin. Thou too hast often accompanied my voice in Branno's hall of generous shells. And often, amidst our voices, was heard the mildest Evirallin. One day she sung of Cormac's fall, the youth that died for her love. I saw the tears on her cheek, and on thine, thou chief of men. Her soul was touched for the unhappy, though she loved him not. How fair among a thousand maids was the daughter of the generous Branno!

Bring not, Carril, I replied, bring not her memory to my mind. My soul must melt at the

the remembrance. My eyes muſt have their tears. Pale in the earth is ſhe the ſoftly-bluſhing fair of my love. But ſit thou on the heath, O Bard, and let us hear thy voice. It is pleaſant as the gale of ſpring that ſighs on the hunter's ear; when he wakens from dreams of joy, and has heard the muſic of the ſpirits of the hill.

FINGAL,

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK VI.

ARGUMENT to Book VI.

Night comes on. Fingal gives a feaſt to his army, at which Swaran is preſent. The king commands Ullin his bard to give the ſong of peace; *a cuſtom always obſerved at the end of a war. Ullin relates the actions of Trenmor, great grandfather to Fingal, in Scandinavia, and his marriage with Inibaca, the daughter of a king of Lochlin who was anceſtor to Swaran; which conſideration, together with his being brother to Agandecca, with whom Fingal was in love in his youth, induced the king to releaſe him, and permit him to return, with the remains of his army, into Lochlin, upon his promiſe of never returning to Ireland, in a hoſtile manner. The night is ſpent in ſettling Swaran's departure, in ſongs of bards, and in a converſation in which the ſtory of Grumal is introduced by Fingal. Morning comes. Swaran departs; Fingal goes on a hunting party, and finding Cuchullin in the cave of Tura, comforts him, and ſets ſail, the next day, for Scotland; which concludes the poem.*

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK VI*.

THE clouds of night come rolling down and reſt on Cromla's dark-brown ſteep. The ſtars of the north ariſe over the rolling of the waves of Ullin; they ſhew their heads of fire through the flying miſt of heaven. A diſtant wind roars in the wood; but ſilent and dark is the plain of death.

STILL on the darkening Lena aroſe in my ears the tuneful voice of Carril. He ſung of the companions of our youth, and the days of former years; when we met on the banks of Lego,

* This book opens with the fourth night, and ends on the morning of the ſixth day. The time of five days, five nights, and a part of the ſixth day is taken up in the poem. The ſcene lies in the heath of Lena, and the mountain Cromla on the coaſt of Ulſter.

and ſent round the joy of the ſhell. Cromla, with its cloudy ſteeps, anſwered to his voice. The ghoſts of thoſe he ſung came in their ruſtling blaſts. They were ſeen to bend with joy towards the ſound of their praiſe.

Be thy ſoul bleſt, O Carril, in the midſt of thy eddying winds. O that thou would come to my hall when I am alone by night!---And thou doſt come, my friend, I hear often thy light hand on my harp; when it hangs on the diſtant wall, and the feeble ſound touches my ear. Why doſt thou not ſpeak to me in my grief, and tell when I ſhall behold my friends? But thou paſſeſt away in thy murmuring blaſt; and thy wind whiſtles through the gray hair of Oſſian.

Now on the ſide of Mora the heroes gathered to the feaſt. A thouſand aged oaks are burning to the wind.——The ſtrength * of the ſhells

* By the ſtrength of the ſhell is meant the liquor the heroes drunk: of what kind it was, cannot be aſcertained at this diſtance of time. The tranſlator has met with ſeveral ancient poems that mention wax-lights and wine as common in the halls of Fingal. The names of both are borrowed from the Latin, which plainly ſhews that our anceſtors had them from the Romans, if they had them at all. The Caledonians in their frequent incurſions to the province, might become acquainted with thoſe conveniencies of life, and introduce them into their own country, among the booty which they carried from South Britain.

goes

goes round. And the ſouls of warriors brighten with joy. But the king of Lochlin is ſilent, and ſorrow reddens in the eyes of his pride. He often turned toward Lena and remembered that he fell.

FINGAL leaned on the ſhield of his fathers. His gray locks ſlowly waved on the wind, and glittered to the beam of night. He ſaw the grief of Swaran, and ſpoke to the firſt of Bards.

RAISE, Ullin, raiſe the ſong of peace, and ſooth my ſoul after battle, that my ear may forget the noiſe of arms. And let a hundred harps be near to gladden the king of Lochlin. He muſt depart from us with joy.——None ever went ſad from Fingal. Oſcar! the lightning of my ſword is againſt the ſtrong in battle; but peaceful it lies by my ſide when warriors yield in war.

TRENMOR *, ſaid the mouth of the ſongs, lived in the days of other years. He bounded over the waves of the north: companion of the ſtorm. The high rocks of the land of Lochlin, and its groves of murmuring ſounds appeared to the hero through the miſt;---he bound his white-boſomed ſails.——Trenmor purſued the boar

* Trenmor was great grandfather to Fingal. The ſtory is introduced to facilitate the diſmiſſion of Swaran,

that

that roared along the woods of Gormal. Many had fled from its preſence; but the ſpear of Trenmor ſlew it.

THREE chiefs, that beheld the deed, told of the mighty ſtranger. They told that he ſtood like a pillar of fire in the bright arms of his valour. The king of Lochlin prepared the feaſt, and called the blooming Trenmor. Three days he feaſted at Gormal's windy towers; and got his choice in the combat.

THE land of Lochlin had no hero that yielded not to Trenmor. The ſhell of joy went round with ſongs in praiſe of the king of Morven; he that came over the waves, the firſt of mighty men.

Now when the fourth gray morn aroſe, the hero launched his ſhip; and walking along the ſilent ſhore waited for the ruſhing wind. For loud and diſtant he heard the blaſt murmuring in the grove.

COVERED over with arms of ſteel a ſon of the woody Gormal appeared. Red was his cheek and fair his hair. His ſkin like the ſnow of Morven. Mild rolled his blue and ſmiling eye when he ſpoke to the king of ſwords.

STAY, Trenmor, ſtay thou firſt of men, thou haſt not conquered Lonval's ſon. My ſword

ſword has often met the brave. And the wiſe ſhun the ſtrength of my bow.

Thou fair-haired youth, Trenmor replied, I will not fight with Lonval's ſon. Thine arm is feeble, ſun-beam of beauty. Retire to Gormal's dark-brown hinds.

But I will retire, replied the youth, with the ſword of Trenmor; and exult in the ſound of my fame. The virgins ſhall gather with ſmiles around him who conquered Trenmor. They ſhall ſigh with the ſighs of love, and admire the length of thy ſpear; when I ſhall carry it among thouſands, and lift the glittering point to the ſun.

Thou ſhalt never carry my ſpear, ſaid the angry king of Morven.——Thy mother ſhall find thee pale on the ſhore of the echoing Gormal; and, looking over the dark-blue deep, ſee the ſails of him that ſlew her ſon.

I will not lift the ſpear, replied the youth, my arm is not ſtrong with years. But with the feathered dart I have learned to pierce a diſtant foe. Throw down that heavy mail of ſteel; for Trenmor is covered all over.——I firſt will lay my mail on earth.——Throw now thy dart, thou king of Morven.

He ſaw the heaving of her breaſt. It was the ſiſter of the king.---She had ſeen him in the

halls of Gormal; and loved his face of youth. ——The ſpear dropt from the hand of Trenmor: he bent his red cheek to the ground, for he had ſeen her like a beam of light that meets the ſons of the cave, when they reviſit the fields of the ſun, and bend their aching eyes.

Chief of the windy Morven, begun the maid of the arms of ſnow; let me reſt in thy bounding ſhip, far from the love of Corlo. For he, like the thunder of the deſart, is terrible to Inibaca. He loves me in the gloom of his pride, and ſhakes ten thouſand ſpears.

Rest thou in peace, ſaid the mighty Trenmor, behind the ſhield of my fathers. I will not fly from the chief, though he ſhakes ten thouſand ſpears.

Three days he waited on the ſhore; and ſent his horn abroad. He called Corlo to battle from all his echoing hills. But Corlo came not to battle. The king of Lochlin deſcended. He feaſted on the roaring ſhore; and gave the maid to Trenmor.

King of Lochlin, ſaid Fingal, thy blood flows in the veins of thy foe. Our families met in battle, becauſe they loved the ſtrife of ſpears. But often did they feaſt in the hall; and ſend round the joy of the ſhell.——Let thy face brighten with gladneſs, and thine ear delight in the

the harp. Dreadful as the ſtorm of thine ocean thou haſt poured thy valour forth; thy voice has been like the voice of thouſands when they engage in battle. Raiſe, to-morrow, thy white ſails to the wind, thou brother of Agandecca. Bright as the beam of noon ſhe comes on my mournful ſoul. I ſaw thy tears for the fair one, and ſpared thee in the halls of Starno; when my ſword was red with ſlaughter, and my eye full of tears for the maid.——Or doſt thou chuſe the fight? The combat which thy fathers gave to Trenmor is thine: that thou mayeſt depart renowned like the ſun ſetting in the weſt.

King of the race of Morven, ſaid the chief of the waves of Lochlin; never will Swaran fight with thee, firſt of a thouſand heroes! I ſaw thee in the halls of Starno, and few were thy years beyond my own.——When ſhall I, ſaid I to my ſoul, lift the ſpear like the noble Fingal? We have fought heretofore, O warrior, on the ſide of the ſhaggy Malmor; after my waves had carried me to thy halls, and the feaſt of a thouſand ſhells was ſpread. Let the bards ſend him who overcame to future years, for noble was the ſtrife of heathy Malmor.

But many of the ſhips of Lochlin have loſt their youths on Lena. Take theſe, thou king of Morven, and be the friend of Swaran. And

when thy ſons ſhall come to the moſſy towers of Gormal, the feaſt of ſhells ſhall be ſpread, and the combat offered on the vale.

Nor ſhip, replied the king, ſhall Fingal take, nor land of many hills. The deſart is enough to me with all its deer and woods. Riſe on thy waves again, thou noble friend of Agandecca. Spread thy white ſails to the beam of the morning, and return to the echoing hills of Gormal.

Blest be thy ſoul, thou king of ſhells, ſaid Swaran of the dark-brown ſhield. In peace thou art the gale of ſpring. In war the mountain-ſtorm. Take now my hand in friendſhip, thou noble king of Morven. Let thy bards mourn thoſe who fell. Let Erin give the ſons of Lochlin to earth; and raiſe the moſſy ſtones of their fame. That the children of the north hereafter may behold the place where their fathers fought. And ſome hunter may ſay, when he leans on a moſſy tomb, here Fingal and Swaran fought, the heroes of other years. Thus hereafter ſhall he ſay, and our fame ſhall laſt for ever.

Swaran, ſaid the king of the hills, to-day our fame is greateſt. We ſhall paſs away like a dream. No ſound will be in the fields of our battles. Our tombs will be loſt in the heath. The hunter ſhall not know the place of our reſt.

Our

Our names may be heard in ſong, but the ſtrength of our arms will ceaſe. O Oſſian, Carril, and Ullin, you know of heroes that are no more. Give us the ſong of other years. Let the night paſs away on the ſound, and morning return with joy.

We gave the ſong to the kings, and a hundred harps accompanied our voice. The face of Swaran brightened like the full moon of heaven, when the clouds vaniſh away, and leave her calm and broad in the midſt of the ſky.

It was then that Fingal ſpoke to Carril the chief of other times. Where is the ſon of Semo; the king of the iſle of miſt? has he retired, like the meteor of death, to the dreary cave of Tura?

Cuchullin, ſaid Carril of other times, lies in the dreary cave of Tura. His hand is on the ſword of his ſtrength. His thoughts on the battle which he loſt. Mournful is the king of ſpears; for he has often been victorious. He ſends the ſword of his war to reſt on the ſide of Fingal. For, like the ſtorm of the deſart, thou haſt ſcattered all his foes. Take, O Fingal, the ſword of the hero; for his fame is departed like miſt when it flies before the ruſtling wind of the vale.

No: replied the king, Fingal ſhall never take his ſword. His arm is mighty in war; and tell

him his fame ſhall never fail. Many have been overcome in battle, that have ſhone afterwards like the ſun of heaven.

O Swaran, king of the reſounding woods, give all thy grief away.——The vanquiſhed, if brave, are renowned; they are like the ſun in a cloud when he hides his face in the ſouth, but looks again on the hills of graſs.

Grumal was a chief of Cona. He ſought the battle on every coaſt. His ſoul rejoic d in blood; his ear in the din of arms. He poured his warriors on the ſounding Craca; and Craca's king met him from his grove; for then within the circle of Brumo * he ſpoke to the ſtone of power.

Fierce was the battle of the heroes, for the maid of the breaſt of ſnow. The fame of the daughter of Craca had reached Grumal at the ſtreams of Cona; he vowed to have the white-boſomed maid, or die on the echoing Craca. Three days they ſtrove together, and Grumal on the fourth was bound.

Far from his friends they placed him in the horrid circle of Brumo; where often, they ſaid, the ghoſts of the dead howled round the ſtone of

* This paſſage alludes to the religion of the king of Craca. See a note on a ſimilar ſubject in the third book.

their

their fear. But afterwards he ſhone like a pillar of the light of heaven. They fell by his mighty hand, and Grumal had his fame.

Raise, ye bards of other times, raiſe high the praiſe of heroes; that my ſoul may ſettle on their fame; and the mind of Swaran ceaſe to be ſad.

They lay in the heath of Mora; the dark winds ruſtled over the heroes.——A hundred voices at once aroſe, a hundred harps were ſtrung; they ſung of other times, and the mighty chiefs of former years.

When now ſhall I hear the bard; or rejoice at the fame of my fathers? The harp is not ſtrung on Morven; nor the voice of muſic raiſed on Cona. Dead with the mighty is the bard; and fame is in the deſart no more.

Morning trembles with the beam of the eaſt, and glimmers on gray-headed Cromla. Over Lena is heard the horn of Swaran, and the ſons of the ocean gather around.——Silent and ſad they mount the wave, and the blaſt of Ullin is behind their ſails. White, as the miſt of Morven, they float along the ſea.

Call, ſaid Fingal, call my dogs, the long-bounding ſons of the chace. Call white-breaſted Bran; and the ſurly ſtrength of Luath.—— Fillan, and Ryno---but he is not here; my ſon

reſts on the bed of death. Fillan and Fergus, blow my horn, that the joy of the chace may ariſe; that the deer of Cromla may hear and ſtart at the lake of roes.

The ſhrill ſound ſpreads along the wood. The ſons of heathy Cromla ariſe.——A thouſand dogs fly off at once, gray-bounding through the heath. A deer fell by every dog, and three by the white-breaſted Bran. He brought them, in their flight, to Fingal, that the joy of the king might be great.

One deer fell at the tomb of Ryno; and the grief of Fingal returned. He ſaw how peaceful lay the ſtone of him who was the firſt at the chace.——No more ſhalt thou riſe, O my ſon, to partake of the feaſt of Cromla. Soon will thy tomb be hid, and the graſs grow rank on thy grave. The ſons of the feeble ſhall paſs over it, and ſhall not know that the mighty lie there.

Ossian and Fillan, ſons of my ſtrength, and Gaul king of the blue ſwords of war, let us aſcend the hill to the cave of Tura, and find the chief of the battles of Erin.——Are theſe the walls of Tura? gray and lonely they riſe on the heath. The king of ſhells is ſad, and the halls are deſolate. Come let us find the king of ſwords, and give him all our joy.——But is that Cuchullin,

chullin, O Fillan, or a pillar of ſmoke on the heath? The wind of Cromla is on my eyes, and I diſtinguiſh not my friend.

Fingal! replied the youth, it is the ſon of Semo. Gloomy and ſad is the hero; his hand is on his ſword. Hail to the ſon of battle, breaker of the ſhields!

Hail to thee, replied Cuchullin, hail to all the ſons of Morven. Delightful is thy preſence, O Fingal, it is like the ſun on Cromla; when the hunter mourns his abſence for a ſeaſon, and ſees him between the clouds. Thy ſons are like ſtars that attend thy courſe, and give light in the night. It is not thus thou haſt ſeen me, O Fingal, returning from the wars of the deſart; when the kings of the world * had fled, and joy returned to the hill of hinds.

Many are thy words, Cuchullin, ſaid Connan † of ſmall renown. Thy words are many, ſon of Semo, but where are thy deeds in arms? Why did we come over the ocean to aid thy

* This is the only paſſage in the poem, wherein the wars of Fingal againſt the Romans are alluded to: —The Roman emperor is diſtinguiſhed in old compoſitions by the title of *king of the world*.

† Connan was of the family of Morni. He is mentioned in ſeveral other poems, and always appears with the ſame character. The poet paſſed him over in ſilence till now, and his behaviour here deſerves no better uſage.

feeble ſword? Thou flyeſt to thy cave of ſorrow, and Connan fights thy battles: Reſign to me theſe arms of light; yield them, thou ſon of Erin.

No hero, replied the chief, ever fought the arms of Cuchullin; and had a thouſand heroes fought them it were in vain, thou gloomy youth. I fled not to the cave of ſorrow, as long as Erin's warriors lived.

Youth of the feeble arm, ſaid Fingal, Connan, ſay no more. Cuchullin is renowned in battle, and terrible over the deſart. Often have I heard thy fame, thou ſtormy chief of Innisfail. Spread now thy white ſails for the iſle of miſt, and ſee Bragela leaning on her rock. Her tender eye is in tears, and the winds lift her long hair from her heaving breaſt. She liſtens to the winds of night to hear the voice of thy rowers *; to hear the ſong of the ſea, and the ſound of thy diſtant harp.

And long ſhall ſhe liſten in vain; Cuchullin ſhall never return. How can I behold Bragela to raiſe the ſigh of her breaſt? Fingal, I was always victorious in the battles of other ſpears!

* The practice of ſinging when they row is univerſal among the inhabitants of the north-weſt coaſt of Scotland and the iſles. It deceives time, and inſpirits the rowers.

And hereafter thou ſhalt be victorious, ſaid Fingal king of ſhells. The fame of Cuchullin ſhall grow like the branchy tree of Cromla. Many battles await thee, O chief, and many ſhall be the wounds of thy hand. Bring hither, Oſcar, the deer, and prepare the feaſt of ſhells; that our ſouls may rejoice after danger, and our friends delight in our preſence.

We ſat, we feaſted, and we ſung. The ſoul of Cuchullin roſe. The ſtrength of his arm returned; and gladneſs brightened on his face. Ullin gave the ſong, and Carril raiſed the voice. I, often, joined the bards, and ſung of battles of the ſpear.——Battles! where I often fought; but now I fight no more. The fame of my former actions is ceaſed; and I ſit forlorn at the tombs of my friends.

Thus they paſſed the night in the ſong; and brought back the morning with joy. Fingal aroſe on the heath, and ſhook his glittering ſpear in his hand.——He moved firſt toward the plains of Lena, and we followed like a ridge of fire. Spread the ſail, ſaid the king of Morven, and catch the winds that pour from Lena.—— We roſe on the wave with ſongs, and ruſhed, with joy, through the foam of the ocean *.

* It is allowed by the beſt critics that an epic poem ought to end happily. This rule, in its moſt material circumſtances, is obſerved

obſerved by the three moſt deſervedly celebrated poets, Homer, Virgil, and Milton; yet, I know not how it happens, the concluſions of their poems throw a melancholy damp on the mind. One leaves his reader at a funeral; another at the untimely death of a hero; and the third in the ſolitary ſcenes of an unpeopled world.

Ὡς οἵγ' ἀμφίεπον ταφον Ἕκτορος ἱπποδάμοιο.

HOMER.

Such honours Ilion to her hero paid,
And peaceful ſlept the mighty Hector's ſhade.

POPE.

——*Ferrum adverſo ſub pectore condit*
Fervidus. Aſt illi ſolvuntur frigore membra,
Vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata ſub umbras.

VIRGIL.

He rais'd his arm aloft; and at the word
Deep in his boſom drove the ſhining ſword.
The ſtreaming blood diſtain'd his arms around,
And the diſdainful ſoul came ruſhing thro' the wound.

DRYDEN.

They, hand in hand, with wand'ring ſteps and ſlow,
Through Eden took their ſolitary way.

MILTON.

COMALA:

COMALA:

A

DRAMATIC POEM*.

The PERSONS.

FINGAL.	MELILCOMA,	daughters of Morni.
HIDALLAN.	DERSAGRENA,	
COMALA.	BARDS.	

DERSAGRENA.

THE chace is over.---No noiſe on Ardven but the torrent's roar! —— Daughter of Morni, come from Crona's banks. Lay down the bow and take the harp. Let the night come on with ſongs, and our joy be great on Ardven.

MELILCOMA.

* This poem is valuable on account of the light it throws on the antiquity of Oſſian's compoſitions. The Caracul mentioned here is the ſame with Caracalla the ſon of Severus, who in the year 211 commanded an expedition againſt the Caledonians.—The variety of the meaſure ſhews that the poem was originally ſet to muſic,

MELILCOMA *.

AND night comes on, thou blue-eyed maid, gray night grows dim along the plain. I saw a deer at Crona's stream; a mossy bank he seemed through the gloom, but soon he bounded away. A meteor played round his branchy horns; and the awful faces † of other times looked from the clouds of Crona.

music, and perhaps presented before the chiefs upon solemn occasions.——Tradition has handed down the story more complete than it is in the poem.—" Comala, the daughter of Sarno king of Inistore or Orkney islands, fell in love with Fingal the son of Comhal at a feast, to which her father had invited him, [Fingal, B. III.] upon his return from Lochlin, after the death of Agandecca. Her passion was so violent, that she followed him, disguised like a youth, who wanted to be employed in his wars. She was soon discovered by Hidallan the son of Lamor, one of Fingal's heroes, whose love she had slighted some time before—Her romantic passion and beauty recommended her so much to the king, that he had resolved to make her his wife; when news was brought him of Caracul's expedition. He marched to stop the progress of the enemy, and Comala attended him.——He left her on a hill, within sight of Caracul's army, when he himself went to battle, having previously promised, if he survived, to return that night." The sequel of the story may be gathered from the poem itself.

* Melilcoma,—*soft-rolling eye.*

† *Apparent diræ facies, inimicaque Trojæ*
Numina magna deûm. VIRG.

——dreadful sounds I hear,
And the dire forms of hostile gods appear.
DRYDEN.

DERSAGRENA.

DERSAGRENA *.

THESE are the ſigns of Fingal's death.——The king of ſhields is fallen!---and Caracul prevails. Riſe, Comala †, from thy rocks; daughter of Sarno, riſe in tears. The youth of thy love is low, and his ghoſt is already on our hills.

MELILCOMA.

THERE Comala ſits forlorn! two gray dogs near ſhake their rough ears, and catch the flying breeze. Her red cheek reſts on her arm, and the mountain wind is in her hair. She turns her blue-rolling eyes towards the fields of his promiſe.——Where art thou, O Fingal, for the night is gathering around?

COMALA.

O CARUN ‡ of the ſtreams! why do I behold thy waters rolling in blood? Has the noiſe of the

* Derſagrena, *the brightneſs of a ſun-beam.*

† Comala, *the maid of the pleaſant brow.*

‡ Carun or Cara'on, *a winding river.*—This river retains ſtill the name of Carron, and falls into the Forth ſome miles to the North of Falkirk.

——*Genteſque alias cum pelleret armis*
Sedibus, aut victas vilem ſervaret in uſum

the battle been heard on thy banks; and ſleeps the king of Morven?——Riſe, moon, thou daughter of the ſky! look from between thy clouds, that I may behold the light of his ſteel, on the field of his promiſe.---Or rather let the meteor, that lights our departed fathers through the night, come, with its red light, to ſhew me the way to my fallen hero. Who will defend me from ſorrow? Who from the love of Hidallan? Long ſhall Comala look before ſhe can behold Fingal in the midſt of his hoſt; bright as the beam of the morning in the cloud of an early ſhower.

HIDALLAN *.

ROLL, thou miſt of gloomy Crona, roll on the path of the hunter. Hide his ſteps from mine eyes, and let me remember my friend no more. The bands of battle are ſcattered, and

Servitii, hic contenta ſuos defendere fines
Roma ſi curigeris prætendit mœnia Scotis:
Hic ſpe progreſſus poſita, Caronis ad undam
Terminus Auſonii ſignat divortia regni.

BUCHANAN.

† Hidallan was ſent by Fingal to give notice to Comala of his return; he, to revenge himſelf on her for ſlighting his love ſome time before, told her that the king was killed in battle. He even pretended that he carried his body from the field to be buried in her preſence; and this circumſtance makes it probable that the poem was preſented of old.

no

no crowding ſteps are round the noiſe of his ſteel. O Carun, roll thy ſtreams of blood, for the chief of the people fell.

COMALA.

WHO fell on Carun's graſſy banks, ſon of the cloudy night? Was he white as the ſnow of Ardven? Blooming as the bow of the ſhower? Was his hair like the miſt of the hill, ſoft and curling in the day of the ſun? Was he like the thunder of heaven in battle? Fleet as the roe of the deſart?

HIDALLAN.

O THAT I might behold his love, fair-leaning from her rock! Her red eye dim in tears, and her bluſhing cheek half hid in her locks! Blow, thou gentle breeze, and lift the heavy locks of the maid, that I may behold her white arm, and lovely cheek of her ſorrow!

COMALA.

AND is the ſon of Comhal fallen, chief of the mournful tale? The thunder rolls on the hill! ——The lightening flies on wings of fire! But they frighten not Comala; for her Fingal fell. Say, chief of the mournful tale, fell the breaker of ſhields?

HIDALLAN.

THE nations are ſcattered on their hills; for they ſhall hear the voice of the chief no more.

COMALA.

CONFUSION purſue thee over thy plains; and deſtruction overtake thee, thou king of the world. Few be thy ſteps to thy grave; and let one virgin mourn thee. Let her be, like Comala, tearful in the days of her youth.——Why haſt thou told me, Hidallan, that my hero fell? I might have hoped a little while his return, and have thought I ſaw him on the diſtant rock; a tree might have deceived me with his appearance; and the wind of the hill been the ſound of his horn in mine ear. O that I were on the banks of Carun! that my tears might be warm on his cheek!

HIDALLAN.

HE lies not on the banks of Carun: on Ardven heroes raiſe his tomb. Look on them, O moon, from thy clouds; be thy beam bright on his breaſt, that Comala may behold him in the light of his armour.

COMALA.

STOP, ye ſons of the grave, till I behold my love. He left me at the chace alone. I knew

not

not that he went to war. He ſaid he would return with the night; and the king of Morven is returned. Why didſt thou not tell me that he would fall, O trembling ſon of the rock*! Thou haſt ſeen him in the blood of his youth, but thou didſt not tell Comala!

MELILCOMA.

WHAT ſound is that on Ardven? Who is that bright in the vale? Who comes like the ſtrength of rivers, when their crowded waters glitter to the moon?

COMALA.

WHO is it but the foe of Comala, the ſon of the king of the world! Ghoſt of Fingal! do thou, from thy cloud, direct Comala's bow. Let him fall like the hart of the deſart.——It is Fingal in the crowd of his ghoſts.---Why doſt thou come, my love, to frighten and pleaſe my ſoul?

FINGAL.

RAISE, ye bards of the ſong, the wars of the ſtreamy Carun. Caracul has fled from my arms

* By *the ſon of the rock* ſhe means a druid. It is probable that ſome of the order of the druids remained as late as the beginning of the reign of Fingal; and that Comala had conſulted one of them concerning the event of the war with Caracul.

along the fields of his pride. He ſets far diſtant like a meteor that incloſes a ſpirit of night, when the winds drive it over the heath, and the dark woods are gleaming around.

I HEARD a voice like the breeze of my hills. Is it the huntreſs of Galmal, the white-handed daughter of Sarno? Look from thy rocks *, my love; and let me hear the voice of Comala.

COMALA.

TAKE me to the cave of thy reſt, O lovely ſon of death!——

FINGAL.

COME to the cave of my reſt.——The ſtorm is over †, and the ſun is on our fields. Come to the cave of my reſt, huntreſs of echoing Cona.

COMALA.

HE is returned with his fame; I feel the right hand of his battles.——But I muſt reſt beſide the rock till my ſoul ſettle from fear.---Let the harp

* O my dove *that art* in the cleſts of the rock, in the ſecret *places* of the ſtairs, let me ſee thy countenance, let me hear thy voice. SOLOMON's Song.

† The winter is paſt, the rain is over and gone. SOLOMON's Song.

be near; and raiſe the ſong, ye daughters of Morni.

DERSAGRENA.

COMALA has ſlain three deer on Ardven, and the fire aſcends on the rock; go to the feaſt of Comala, king of the woody Morven!

FINGAL.

RAISE, ye ſons of ſong, the wars of the ſtreamy Carun; that my white-handed maid may rejoice: while I behold the feaſt of my love.

BARDS.

ROLL, ſtreamy Carun, roll in joy, the ſons of battle fled. The ſteed is not ſeen on our fields; and the wings * of their pride ſpread in other lands. The ſun will now riſe in peace, and the ſhadows deſcend in joy. The voice of the chace will be heard; and the ſhields hang in the hall. Our delight will be in the war of the ocean, and our hands be red in the blood of Lochlin. Roll, ſtreamy Carun, roll in joy, the ſons of battle fled.

MELILCOMA.

DESCEND, ye light miſts from high; ye moon-beams, lift her ſoul.——Pale lies the maid at the rock! Comala is no more!

* Perhaps the poet alludes to the Roman eagle.

FINGAL.

Is the daughter of Sarno dead; the white-boſomed maid of my love? Meet me, Comala, on my heaths, when I ſit alone at the ſtreams of my hills.

HIDALLAN.

CEASED the voice of the huntreſs of Galmal? Why did I trouble the ſoul of the maid? When ſhall I ſee thee, with joy, in the chace of the dark-brown hinds?

FINGAL.

YOUTH of the gloomy brow! no more ſhalt thou feaſt in my halls. Thou ſhalt not purſue my chace, and my foes ſhall not fall by thy ſword *.——Lead me to the place of her reſt that I may behold her beauty.——Pale ſhe lies at the rock, and the cold winds liſt her hair. Her bow-ſtring ſounds in the blaſt, and her arrow was broken in her fall. Raiſe the praiſe of the daughter of Sarno, and give her name to the wind of the hills.

BARDS.

SEE! meteors roll around the maid; and moon-beams lift her ſoul! Around her, from

* The ſequel of the ſtory of Hidallan is introduced, as an epiſode, in the poem which immediately follows in this collection.

their

their clouds, bend the awful faces of her fathers; Sarno * of the gloomy brow; and the red-rolling eyes of Fidallan. When ſhall thy white-hand ariſe, and thy voice be heard on our rocks? The maids ſhall ſeek thee on the heath, but they will not find thee. Thou ſhalt come, at times, to their dreams, and ſettle peace in their ſoul. Thy voice ſhall remain in their ears †, and they ſhall think with joy on the dreams of their reſt. Meteors roll around the maid, and moon-beams lift her ſoul!

* Sarno the father of Comala died ſoon after the flight of his daughter.——Fidallan was the firſt king that reigned in Iniſtore.

† The angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him ſtill ſpeaking, ſtill ſtood fix'd to hear.
MILTON.

THE WAR of CAROS*: A POEM.

BRING, daughter of Toſcar, bring the harp; the light of the ſong riſes in Oſſian's ſoul. It is like the field, when darkneſs covers the hills around, and the ſhadow grows ſlowly on the plain of the ſun.

I BEHOLD my ſon, O Malvina, near the moſſy rock of Crona †; but it is the miſt ‡ of the de-

* Caros is probably the noted uſurper Carauſius, by birth a Menapian, who aſſumed the purple in the year 284; and, ſeizing on Britain, defeated the emperor Maximian Herculius in ſeveral naval engagements, which gives propriety to his being called in this poem *the king of ſhips*.——He repaired Agricola's wall, in order to obſtruct the incurſions of the Caledonians; and when he was employed in that work, it appears he was attacked by a party under the command of Oſcar the ſon of Oſſian. This battle is the foundation of the preſent poem, which is addreſſed to Malvina the daughter of Toſcar.

† Crona is the name of a ſmall ſtream which runs into the Carron. On its banks is the ſcene of the preceding dramatic poem.

‡ Who *is* this that cometh out of the wilderneſs like pillars of ſmoke. SOLOMON's Song.

ſart tinged with the beam of the weſt: Lovely is the miſt that aſſumes the form of Oſcar! turn from it, ye winds, when ye roar on the ſide of Ardven.

WHO comes towards my ſon, with the murmur of a ſong? His ſtaff is in his hand, his gray hair looſe on the wind. Surly joy lightens his face; and he often looks back to Caros. It is Ryno * of the ſong, he that went to view the foe.

WHAT does Caros king of ſhips, ſaid the ſon of the now mournful Oſſian? ſpreads he the wings † of his pride, bard of the times of old?

HE ſpreads them, Oſcar, replied the bard, but it is behind his gathered heap ‡. He looks over his ſtones with fear, and beholds thee terrible, as the ghoſt of night that rolls the wave to his ſhips.

Go, thou firſt of my bards, ſays Oſcar, and take the ſpear of Fingal. Fix a flame on its point, and ſhake it to the winds of heaven. Bid him, in ſongs, to advance, and leave the rolling of his wave. Tell to Caros that I long for

* Ryno is often mentioned in the ancient poetry.——He ſeems to have been a bard, of the firſt rank, in the days of Fingal.

† The Roman eagle.

‡ Agricola's wall which Caraufius repaired.

battle;

battle; and that my bow is weary of the chace of Cona. Tell him the mighty are not here; and that my arm is young.

He went with the ſound of his ſong. Oſcar reared his voice on high. It reached his heroes on Ardven, like the noiſe of a cave *; when the ſea of Togorma rolls before it; and its trees meet the roaring winds.——They gather round my ſon like the ſtreams of the hill; when, after rain, they roll in the pride of their courſe.

Ryno came to the mighty Caros, and ſtruck his flaming ſpear. Come to the battle of Oſcar, O thou that ſitteſt on the rolling of waters. Fingal is diſtant far; he hears the ſongs of his bards in Morven: and the wind of his hall is in his hair. His terrible ſpear is at his ſide; and his ſhield that is like that darkened moon. Come to the battle of Oſcar; the hero is alone.

He came not over the ſtreamy Carun †; the bard returned with his ſong. Gray night grows dim on Crona. The feaſt of ſhells is ſpread. A hundred oaks burn to the wind, and faint light gleams over the heath. The ghoſts of Ardven paſs through the beam, and ſhew their

* —— As when the hollow rocks retain
The ſound of bluſtering winds.— Milton.

† The river Carron.

dim

dim and diſtant forms. Comala * is half-unſeen on her meteor; and Hidallan is ſullen and dim, like the darkened moon behind the miſt of night.

WHY art thou ſad? ſaid Ryno; for he alone beheld the chief. Why art thou ſad, Hidallan, haſt thou not received thy fame? The ſongs of Oſſian have been heard, and thy ghoſt has brightened in the wind, when thou didſt bend from thy cloud to hear the ſong of Morven's bard.

AND do thine eyes behold the hero, ſaid Oſcar, like the dim meteor of night? Say, Ryno, ſay, how fell the chief that was ſo renowned in the days of our fathers?——His name remains on the rocks of Cona; and I have often ſeen the ſtreams of his hills.

FINGAL, replied the bard, had driven Hidallan from his wars. The king's ſoul was ſad for Comala, and his eyes could not behold Hidallan.

LONELY, ſad, along the heath, he ſlowly moved with ſilent ſteps. His arms hang diſordered on his ſide. His hair flies looſe from his

* This is the ſcene of Comala's death, which is the ſubject of the dramatic poem. — The poet mentions her in this place, in order to introduce the ſequel of Hidallan's ſtory, who, on account of her death, had been expelled from the wars of Fingal.

helmet

helmet. The tear is in his down-caſt eyes; and the ſigh half-ſilent in his breaſt.

THREE days he ſtrayed unſeen, alone, before he came to Lamor's halls: the moſſy halls of his fathers, at the ſtream of Balva *.——There Lamor ſat alone beneath a tree; for he had ſent his people with Hidallan to war. The ſtream ran at his feet, and his gray head reſted on his ſtaff. Sightleſs are his aged eyes. He hums the ſong of other times.——The noiſe of Hidallan's feet came to his ear: he knew the tread of his ſon.

Is the ſon of Lamor returned; or is it the ſound of his ghoſt? Haſt thou fallen on the banks of Carun, ſon of the aged Lamor? Or, if I hear the ſound of Hidallan's feet; where are the mighty in war? where are my people, Hidallan, that were wont to return with their echoing ſhields?——Have they fallen on the banks of Carun?

No: replied the ſighing youth, the people of Lamor live. They are renowned in battle, my father; but Hidallan is renowned no more. I muſt ſit alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of the battle grows.

* This is perhaps that ſmall ſtream, ſtill retaining the name of Balva, which runs through the romantic valley of Glentivar in Stirlingſhire. Balva ſignifies *a ſilent ſtream*; and Glentivar, *the ſequeſtered vale*.

BUT

But thy fathers never ſat alone, replied the riſing pride of Lamor; they never ſat alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of battle roſe. ——Doſt thou not behold that tomb? Mine eyes diſcern it not: there reſts the noble Garmállon who never fled from war.——Come, thou renowned in battle, he ſays, come to thy father's tomb.——How am I renowned, Garmállon, for my ſon has fled from war?

King of the ſtreamy Balva! ſaid Hidallan with a ſigh, why doſt thou torment my ſoul? Lamor, I never feared.---Fingal was ſad for Comala, and denied his wars to Hidallan: Go to the gray ſtreams of thy land, he ſaid, and moulder like a leafleſs oak, which the winds have bent over Balva, never more to grow.

And muſt I hear, Lamor replied, the lonely tread of Hidallan's feet? When thouſands are renowned in battle, ſhall he bend over my gray ſtreams? Spirit of the noble Garmállon! carry Lamor to his place; his eyes are dark; his ſoul is ſad: and his ſon has loſt his fame.

Where, ſaid the youth, ſhall I ſearch for fame to gladden the ſoul of Lamor? From whence ſhall I return with renown, that the ſound of my arms may be pleaſant in his ear? ——If I go to the chace of hinds, my name will not be heard.---Lamor will not feel my dogs, with

with his hands, glad at my arrival from the hill. He will not enquire of his mountains, or of the dark-brown deer of his deſarts.

I MUST fall, ſaid Lamor, like a leafleſs oak: it grew on a rock, but the winds have overturned it. —— My ghoſt will be ſeen on my hills, mournful for my young Hidallan. Will not ye, ye miſts, as ye riſe, hide him from my ſight? ——My ſon!---go to Lamor's hall: there the arms of our fathers hang.---Bring the ſword of Garmállon;---he took it from a foe.

HE went and brought the ſword with all its ſtudded thongs.——He gave it to his father. The gray-haired hero felt the point with his hand.——

MY ſon!---lead me to Garmállon's tomb: it riſes beſide that ruſtling tree. The long graſs is withered;---I heard the breeze whiſtling there. ---A little fountain murmurs near, and ſends its water to Balva. There let me reſt; it is noon: and the ſun is on our fields.

HE led him to Garmállon's tomb. Lamor pierced the ſide of his ſon.——They ſleep together; and their ancient halls moulder on Balva's banks.---Ghoſts are ſeen there at noon: the valley is ſilent, and the people ſhun the place of Lamor.

MOURNFUL

MOURNFUL is thy tale, ſaid Oſcar, ſon of the times of old!---My ſoul ſighs for Hidallan; he fell in the days of his youth. He flies on the blaſt of the deſart, and his wandering is in a foreign land.——

SONS of the echoing Morven! draw near to the foes of Fingal. Send the night away in ſongs; and watch the ſtrength of Caros. Oſcar goes to the people of other times; to the ſhades of ſilent Ardven; where his fathers ſit dim in their clouds, and behold the future war.---And art thou there, Hidallan, like a half-extinguiſhed meteor? Come to my ſight, in thy ſorrow, chief of the roaring Balva!

THE heroes move with their ſongs.---Oſcar ſlowly aſcends the hill.---The meteors of night are ſetting on the heath before him. A diſtant torrent faintly roars.---Unfrequent blaſts ruſh through aged oaks. The half-enlightened moon ſinks dim and red behind her hill.---Feeble voices are heard on the heath.——Oſcar drew his ſword.

COME, ſaid the hero, O ye ghoſts of my fathers! ye that fought againſt the kings of the world!---Tell me the deeds of future times; and your diſcourſe in your caves; when you talk together and behold your ſons in the fields of the valiant.

TRENMOR

TRENMOR came, from his hill, at the voice of his mighty ſon.---A cloud, like the ſteed of the ſtranger, ſupported his airy limbs. His robe is of the miſt of Lano, that brings death to the people. His ſword is a meteor half-extinguiſhed. His face is without form, and dark. He ſighed thrice over the hero: and thrice the winds of the night roared around. Many were his words to OSCAR: but they only came by halves to our ears: they were dark as the tales of other times, before the light of the ſong aroſe. He ſlowly vaniſhed, like a miſt that melts on the ſunny hill.

IT was then, O daughter of Toſcar, my ſon begun firſt to be ſad. He foreſaw the fall of his race; and, at times, he was thoughtful and dark; like the ſun * when he carries a cloud on his face; but he looks afterwards on the hills of Cona.

OSCAR paſſed the night among his fathers, gray morning met him on the banks of Carun.

A GREEN vale ſurrounded a tomb which aroſe in the times of old. Little hills lift their head at a diſtance; and ſtretch their old trees to the wind. The warriors of Caros ſat there, for

* ——*caput obſcura nitidum ferrugine texit.* VIRG.

they

they had paſſed the ſtream by night. They appeared, like the trunks of aged pines, to the pale light of the morning.

Oscar ſtood at the tomb, and raiſed thrice his terrible voice. The rocking hills echoed around: the ſtarting roes bounded away. And the trembling ghoſts of the dead fled, ſhrieking on their clouds. So terrible was the voice of my ſon, when he called his friends.

A thousand ſpears roſe around; the people of Caros roſe.---Why daughter of Toſcar, why that tear? My ſon, though alone, is brave. Oſcar is like a beam of the ſky; he turns around and the people fall. His hand is like the arm of a ghoſt, when he ſtretches it from a cloud: the reſt of his thin form is unſeen: but the people die in the vale.

My ſon beheld the approach of the foe; and he ſtood in the ſilent darkneſs of his ſtrength. ——"Am I alone, ſaid Oſcar, in the midſt of a thouſand foes?---Many a ſpear is there!---many a darkly-rolling eye!---Shall I fly to Ardven?---But did my fathers ever fly!——The mark of their arm is in a thouſand battles. ---Oſcar too will be renowned.——Come, ye dim ghoſts of my fathers, and behold my deeds

in war!---I may fall; but I will be renowned like the race of the echoing Morven *."

He ſtood dilated in his place, like a flood ſwelling in a narrow vale. The battle came, but they fell: bloody was the ſword of Oſcar.——The noiſe reached his people at Crona; they came like a hundred ſtreams. The warriors of Caros fled, and Oſcar remained like a rock left by the ebbing ſea.

Now dark and deep, with all his ſteeds, Caros rolled his might along: the little ſtreams are loſt in his courſe; and the earth is rocking round.——Battle ſpreads from wing to wing: ten thouſand ſwords gleam at once in the ſky. ——But why ſhould Oſſian ſing of battles?---For never more ſhall my ſteel ſhine in war. I remember the days of my youth with ſorrow;

* This paſſage is very like the ſoliloquy of Ulyſſes upon a ſimilar occaſion.

Ὠιμοῖ εγὼ, τί πάθω; μεγα μὲν κακὸν, αικε φέβωμαι,
Πληθὺν ταρβήσας· το δὲ ῥιγιον αικεν ἁλοω
Μῦνος· &c. Hom. Il. 11.

What farther ſubterfuge, what hopes remain?
What ſhame, inglorious if I quit the plain?
What danger, ſingly if I ſtand the ground,
My friends all ſcatter'd, all the foes around?
Yet wherefore doubtful? let this truth ſuffice;
The brave meets danger, and the coward flies:
To die or conquer proves a hero's heart,
And knowing this, I know a ſoldier's part.

Pope.

when I feel the weakneſs of my arm. Happy are they who fell in their youth, in the midſt of their renown!---They have not beheld the tombs of their friends: or failed to bend the bow of their ſtrength.——Happy art thou, O Oſcar, in the midſt of thy ruſhing blaſt. Thou often goeſt to the fields of thy fame, where Caros fled from thy lifted ſword.

Darkness comes on my ſoul, O fair daughter of Toſcar, I behold not the form of my ſon at Carun; nor the figure of Oſcar on Crona. The ruſtling winds have carried him far away; and the heart of his father is ſad.

But lead me, O Malvina, to the ſound of my woods, and the roar of my mountain ſtreams. Let the chace be heard on Cona; that I may think on the days of other years.---And bring me the harp, O maid, that I may touch it when the light of my ſoul ſhall ariſe.——Be thou near, to learn the ſong; and future times ſhall hear of Oſſian.

The ſons of the feeble hereafter will lift the voice on Cona; and, looking up to the rocks, ſay, "Here Oſſian dwelt." They ſhall admire the chiefs of old, and the race that are no more: while we ride on our clouds, Malvina, on the wings of the roaring winds. Our voices ſhall be heard, at times, in the deſart; and we ſhall ſing on the winds of the rock.

THE

WAR of INIS-THONA *:

A POEM.

OUR youth is like the dream of the hunter on the hill of heath. He ſleeps in the mild beams of the ſun; but he awakes amidſt a ſtorm; the red lightning flies around: and the trees ſhake their heads to the wind. He looks back with joy on the day of the ſun, and the pleaſant dreams of his reſt!

WHEN ſhall Oſſian's youth return, or his ear delight in the ſound of arms? When ſhall I, like Oſcar, travel † in the light of my ſteel?—

* Inis-thona, *i. e. the iſland of waves*, was a country of Scandinavia ſubject to its own king, but depending upon the kingdom of Lochlin.—This poem is an epiſode introduced in a great work compoſed by Oſſian, in which the actions of his friends, and his beloved ſon Oſcar, were interwoven.——The work itſelf is loſt, but ſome epiſodes, and the ſtory of the poem, are handed down by tradition. There are ſome now living, who, in their youth, have heard the whole repeated.

† Travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength.

ISAIAH lxiii. 1.

Come,

Come, with your ſtreams, ye hills of Cona, and liſten to the voice of Oſſian! The ſong riſes, like the ſun, in my ſoul; and my heart feels the joys of other times.

I BEHOLD my towers, O Selma! and the oaks of thy ſhaded wall:---thy ſtreams ſound in my ear; thy heroes gather round. Fingal ſits in the midſt; and leans on the ſhield of Trenmor:---his ſpear ſtands againſt the wall; he liſtens to the ſong of his bards.---The deeds of his arm are heard; and the actions of the king in his youth.

OSCAR had returned from the chace, and heard the hero's praiſe.---He took the ſhield of Branno * from the wall; his eyes were filled with tears. Red was the cheek of youth. His voice was trembling, low. My ſpear ſhook its bright head in his hand: he ſpoke to Moryen's king.

FINGAL! thou king of heroes! Oſſian, next to him in war! ye have fought the battle in your youth; your names are renowned in ſong. ---Oſcar is like the miſt of Cona: I appear and vaniſh.---The bard will not know my name.---

* This is Branno, the father of Everallin, and grandfather to Oſcar; he was of Iriſh extraction and lord of the country round the lake of Lego.—His great actions are handed down by tradition, and his hoſpitality has paſſed into a proverb.

The hunter will not ſearch in the heath for my tomb. Let me fight, O heroes, in the battles of Inis-thona. Diſtant is the land of my war!---ye ſhall not hear of Oſcar's fall.——Some bard may find me there, and give my name to the ſong.---The daughter of the ſtranger ſhall ſee my tomb, and weep over the youth that came from afar. The bard ſhall ſay, at the feaſt, hear the ſong of Oſcar from the diſtant land.

OSCAR, replied the king of Morven; thou ſhalt fight, ſon of my fame!---Prepare my dark-boſomed ſhip to carry my hero to Inis-thona. Son of my ſon, regard our fame;---for thou art of the race of renown. Let not the children of ſtrangers ſay, feeble are the ſons of Morven!——Be thou, in battle, like the roaring ſtorm: mild as the evening ſun in peace.---Tell, Oſcar, to Inis-thona's king, that Fingal remembers his youth; when we ſtrove in the combat together in the days of Agandecca.

THEY lifted up the ſounding ſail; the wind whiſtled through the thongs * of their maſts. Waves laſhed the oozy rocks: the ſtrength of ocean roared.——My ſon beheld, from the wave, the land of groves. He ruſhed into the

* Leather thongs were uſed in Oſſian's time, inſtead of ropes.

echoing

echoing bay of Runa; and ſent his ſword to Annir king of ſpears.

THE gray-haired hero roſe, when he ſaw the ſword of Fingal. His eyes were full of tears, and he remembered the battles of their youth. Twice they lifted the ſpear before the lovely Agandecca: heroes ſtood far diſtant, as if two ghoſts contended.

BUT now, begun the king, I am old; the ſword lies uſeleſs in my hall. Thou who art of Morven's race! Annir has been in the ſtrife of ſpears; but he is pale and withered now, like the oak of Lano. I have no ſon to meet thee with joy, or to carry thee to the halls of his fathers. Argon is pale in the tomb, and Ruro is no more.---My daughter is in the hall of ſtrangers, and longs to behold my tomb.——Her ſpouſe ſhakes ten thouſand ſpears; and comes * like a cloud of death from Lano.---Come thou,

* Cormalo had reſolved on a war againſt his father-in-law Annir king of Inis-thona, in order to deprive him of his kingdom: the injuſtice of his deſigns was ſo much reſented by Fingal, that he ſent his grandſon, Oſcar, to the aſſiſtance of Annir. Both armies came ſoon to a battle, in which the conduct and valour of Oſcar obtained a complete victory. An end was put to the war by the death of Cormalo, who fell in a ſingle combat, by Oſcar's hand.—Thus is the ſtory delivered down by tradition; though the poet, to raiſe the character of his ſon, makes Oſcar himſelf propoſe the expedition.

to ſhare the feaſt of Annir, ſon of echoing Morven.

THREE days they feaſted together; on the fourth Annir heard the name of Oſcar.*.---They rejoiced in the ſhell †; and purſued the boars of Runa.

BESIDE the fount of moſſy ſtones, the weary heroes reſt. The tear ſteals in ſecret from Annir: and he broke the riſing ſigh.——Here darkly reſt, the hero ſaid, the children of my youth.---This ſtone is the tomb of Ruro: that tree ſounds over the grave of Argon. Do ye hear my voice, O my ſons, within your narrow houſe? Or do ye ſpeak in theſe ruſtling leaves, when the winds of the deſart riſe?

KING of Inis-thona, ſaid Oſcar, how fell the children of youth? The wild boar often ruſhes over their tombs, but he does not diſturb the hunters. They purſue deer ‡ formed of clouds, and

* It was thought, in thoſe days of heroiſm, an infringement upon the laws of hoſpitality, to aſk the name of a ſtranger, before he had feaſted three days in the great hall of the family. *He that aſks the name of the ſtranger*, is, to this day, an opprobrious term applied, in the north, to the inhoſpitable.

† *To rejoice in the ſhell* is a phraſe for feaſting ſumptuouſly and drinking freely. I have obſerved in a preceding note, that the ancient Scots drunk in ſhells.

‡ The notion of Oſſian concerning the ſtate of the deceaſed, was the ſame with that of the ancient Greeks and Romans. They

and bend their airy bow.---They ſtill love the ſport of their youth; and mount the wind with joy.

CORMALO, replied the king, is chief of ten thouſand ſpears; he dwells at the dark-rolling

They imagined that the ſouls purſued, in their ſeparate ſtate, the employments and pleaſures of their former life.

Arma procul, currusque virûm miratur inanes.
Stant terra defixæ haſtæ, paſſimque ſoluti
Per campum paſcuntur equi, quæ gratia curruum
Armorumque fuit vivis; quæ cura nitentes
Paſcere equos, eadem ſequitur tellure repoſtos.

VIRG.

The chief beheld their chariots from afar;
Their ſhining arms and courſers train'd to war:
Their lances fix'd in earth, their ſteeds around,
Free from the harneſs, graze the flow'ry ground.
The love of horſes which they had, alive,
And care of chariots, after death ſurvive.

DRYDEN.

Τὸν δὲ μετ' εἰσενόησα βίην Ἡρακληείην,
Εἴδωλον.———
———ὁ δ', ἐρεμνῇ νυκτὶ ἐοικὼς
Γυμνὸν τόξον ἔχων, καὶ ἐπὶ νευρῇφιν ὀϊστὸν
Δεινὸν ταπλείων, αἰεὶ βαλέοντι ἐοικώς, &c.

Hom. Odyſſ. 11.

Now I the ſtrength of Hercules behold,
A tow'ring ſpectre of gigantic mold;
Gloomy as night he ſtands in act to throw
Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow.
Around his breaſt a wond'rous zone is roll'd
Where woodland monſters grin in fretted gold,
There ſullen lions ſternly ſeem to roar,
The bear to growl, to foam the tuſky boar,
There war and havock and deſtruction ſtood,
And vengeful murder red with human blood.

POPE.

waters

waters of Lano *; which ſend forth the cloud of death. He came to Runa's echoing halls, and fought the honour of the ſpear †. The youth was lovely as the firſt beam of the ſun; and few were they who could meet him in fight!---My heroes yielded to Cormalo: and my daughter loved the ſon of Lano.

ARGON and Ruro returned from the chace; the tears of their pride deſcended:---They rolled their ſilent eyes on Runa's heroes, becauſe they yielded to a ſtranger: three days they feaſted with Cormalo: on the fourth my Argon fought. ---But who could fight with Argon!---Lano's chief was overcome. His heart ſwelled with the grief of pride, and he reſolved, in ſecret, to behold the death of my ſons.

THEY went to the hills of Runa, and purſued the dark-brown hinds. The arrow of Cormalo flew in ſecret; and my children fell. He came to the maid of his love; to Inis-thona's dark-haired maid.——They fled over the deſart---and Annir remained alone.

* Lano was a lake of Scandinavia, remarkable, in the days of Oſſian, for emitting a peſtilential vapour in autumn. *And thou, O valiant Duchomar, like the miſt of marſhy Lano; when it ſails over the plains of autumn, and brings death to the people.*

FINGAL, B. I.

† By *the honour of the ſpear* is meant a kind of tournament practiſed among the ancient northern nations.

NIGHT came on and day appeared; nor Argon's voice, nor Ruro's came. At length their much-loved dog is ſeen; the fleet and bounding Runar. He came into the hall and howled; and ſeemed to look towards the place of their fall. ——We followed him: we found them here: and laid them by this moſſy ſtream. This is the haunt of Annir, when the chace of the hinds is over. I bend like the trunk of an aged oak above them: and my tears for ever flow.

O RONNAN! ſaid the riſing Oſcar, Ogar king of ſpears! call my heroes to my ſide, the ſons of ſtreamy Morven. To-day we go to Lano's water, that ſends forth the cloud of death. Cormalo will not long rejoice: death is often at the point of our ſwords.

THEY came over the deſart like ſtormy clouds, when the winds roll them over the heath: their edges are tinged with lightning: and the echoing groves foreſee the ſtorm. The horn of Oſcar's battle was heard; and Lano ſhook in all its waves. The children of the lake convened around the ſounding ſhield of Cormalo.

OSCAR fought, as he was wont in battle. Cormalo fell beneath his ſword: and the ſons of the diſmal Lano fled to their ſecret vales.—— Oſcar brought the daughter of Inis-thona to Annir's

nir's echoing halls. The face of age was bright with joy; he bleſt the king of ſwords.

How great was the joy of Oſſian, when he beheld the diſtant ſail of his ſon! it was like a cloud of light that riſes in the eaſt, when the traveller is ſad in a land unknown; and diſmal night, with her ghoſts, is ſitting around him.

We brought him, with ſongs, to Selma's halls. Fingal ordered the feaſt of ſhells to be ſpread. A thouſand bards raiſed the name of Oſcar: and Morven anſwered to the noiſe. The daughter of Toſcar was there, and her voice was like the harp; when the diſtant ſound comes, in the evening, on the ſoft-ruſtling breeze of the vale.

O lay me, ye that ſee the light, near ſome rock of my hills: let the thick hazels be around, let the ruſtling oak be near. Green be the place of my reſt; and let the ſound of the diſtant torrent be heard. Daughter of Toſcar, take the harp, and raiſe the lovely ſong of Selma; that ſleep may overtake my ſoul in the midſt of joy; that the dreams of my youth may return, and the days of the mighty Fingal.

Selma! I behold thy towers, thy trees, and ſhaded wall. I ſee the heroes of Morven; and hear the ſong of bards. Oſcar lifts the ſword of Cormalo; and a thouſand youths admire its

ſtudded

ſtudded thongs. They look with wonder on my ſon; and admire the ſtrength of his arm. They mark the joy of his father's eyes; they long for an equal fame.

And ye ſhall have your fame, O ſons of ſtreamy Morven.---My ſoul is often brightened with the ſong; and I remember the companions of my youth.——But ſleep deſcends with the ſound of the harp; and pleaſant dreams begin to riſe. Ye ſons of the chace ſtand far diſtant, nor diſturb my reſt. The bard of other times converſes now with his fathers, the chiefs of the days of old.---Sons of the chace, ſtand far diſtant; diſturb not the dreams of Oſſian.

THE

THE

BATTLE of LORA:

A POEM*.

SON of the diſtant land, who dwelleſt in the ſecret cell! do I hear the ſounds of thy grove? or is it the voice of thy ſongs? The

* This poem is compleat; nor does it appear from tradition, that it was introduced, as an epiſode, into any of Oſſian's great works.—It is called, in the original, *Duan a Chuldich*, or the *Culdee's poem*, becauſe it was addreſſed to one of the firſt Chriſtian miſſionaries, who were called, from their retired life, Culdees, or *ſequeſtered perſons*. —The ſtory bears a near reſemblance to that which was the foundation of the Iliad. Fingal, on his return from Ireland, after he had expelled Swaran from that kingdom, made a feaſt to all his heroes: he forgot to invite Ma-ronnan and Aldo, two chiefs, who had not been along with him on his expedition. They reſented his neglect; and went over to Erragon king of Sora, a country of Scandinavia, the declared enemy of Fingal. The valour of Aldo ſoon gained him a great reputation in Sora: and Lorma the beautiful wife of Erragon fell in love with him.—He found means to eſcape with her, and to come to Fingal, who reſided then in Selma on the weſtern coaſt. —Erragon invaded Scotland, and was ſlain in battle by Gaul the ſon of Morni, after he had rejected terms of peace offered him by Fingal.—In this war Aldo fell, in a ſingle combat, by the hands of his rival Erragon; and the unfortunate Lorma afterwards died of grief.

torrent

torrent was loud in my ear, but I heard a tuneful voice; doſt thou praiſe the chiefs of thy land; or the ſpirits * of the wind?---But, lonely dweller of the rock! look over that heathy plain: thou ſeeſt green tombs, with their rank, whiſtling graſs; with their ſtones of moſſy heads: thou ſeeſt them, ſon of the rock, but Oſſian's eyes have failed.

A MOUNTAIN-STREAM comes roaring down and ſends its waters round a green hill: four moſſy ſtones, in the midſt of withered graſs, rear their heads on the top: two trees, which the ſtorms have bent, ſpread their whiſtling branches around.——This is thy dwelling, Erragon †; this thy narrow houſe: the ſound of thy ſhells has been long forgot in Sora: and thy ſhield is become dark in thy hall.——Erragon, king of ſhips! chief of diſtant Sora! how haſt thou fallen on our mountains ‡! How is the mighty low!

* The poet alludes to the religious hymns of the Culdees.

† Erragon, or Ferg-thonn, ſignifies *the rage of the waves*; probably a poetical name given him by Oſſian himſelf; for he goes by the name of Annir in tradition.

‡ The beauty of Iſrael is ſlain on thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! 2 SAM. ii. 19.

How are the mighty fallen in the midſt of the battle! O Jonathan, thou waſt ſlain in thine high places.

2 SAM. ii. 25.

SON

SON of the ſecret cell! doſt thou delight in ſongs? Hear the battle of Lora; the ſound of its ſteel is long ſince paſt. So thunder on the darkened hill roars and is no more. The ſun returns with his ſilent beams: the glittering rocks, and green heads of the mountains ſmile.

THE bay of Cona received our ſhips *, from Ullin's rolling waves: our white ſheets hung looſe to the maſts: and the boiſterous winds roared behind the groves of Morven.——The horn of the king is ſounded, and the deer ſtart from their rocks. Our arrows flew in the woods; the feaſt of the hill was ſpread. Our joy was great on our rocks, for the fall of the terrible Swaran.

TWO heroes were forgot at our feaſt; and the rage of their boſoms burned. They rolled their red eyes in ſecret: the ſigh burſt from their breaſts. They were ſeen to talk together, and to throw their ſpears on earth. They were two dark clouds, in the miſt of our joy; like pillars of miſt on the ſettled ſea: it glitters to the ſun, but the mariners fear a ſtorm.

RAISE my white ſails, ſaid Ma-ronnan, raiſe them to the winds of the weſt; let us ruſh, O Aldo, through the foam of the northern wave.

* This was at Fingal's return from his war againſt Swaran.

We

We are forgot at the feaſt: but our arms have been red in blood. Let us leave the hills of Fingal, and ſerve the king of Sora.——His countenance is fierce, and the war darkens round his ſpear. Let us be renowned, O Aldo, in the battles of echoing Sora.

They took their ſwords and ſhields of thongs; and ruſhed to Lumar's ſounding bay. They came to Sora's haughty king, the chief of bounding ſteeds.——Erragon had returned from the chace: his ſpear was red in blood. He bent his dark face to the ground: and whiſtled as he went.——He took the ſtrangers to his feaſts: they fought and conquered in his wars.

Aldo returned with his fame towards Sora's lofty walls.---From her tower looked the ſpouſe of Erragon, the humid, rolling eyes of Lorma. ——Her dark-brown hair flies on the wind of ocean: her white breaſt heaves, like ſnow on the heath; when the gentle winds ariſe, and ſlowly move it in the light. She ſaw young Aldo, like the beam of Sora's ſetting ſun. Her ſoft heart ſighed: tears filled her eyes; and her white arm ſupported her head.

Three days ſhe ſat within the hall, and covered grief with joy.---On the fourth ſhe fled with the hero, along the rolling ſea.——They

came to Cona's moſſy towers, to Fingal king of ſpears.

ALDO of the heart of pride! ſaid the riſing king of Morven, ſhall I defend thee from the wrath of Sora's injured king? who will now receive my people into their halls, or give the feaſt of ſtrangers, ſince Aldo, of the little ſoul, has carried away the fair of Sora? Go to thy hills, thou feeble hand, and hide thee in thy caves; mournful is the battle we muſt fight, with Sora's gloomy king.——Spirit of the noble Trenmor! when will Fingal ceaſe to fight? I was born in the midſt of battles *, and my ſteps muſt move in blood to my tomb. But my hand did not injure the weak, my ſteel did not touch the feeble in arms,---I behold thy tempeſts, O Morven, which will overturn my halls; when my children are dead in battle, and none remains to dwell in Selma. Then will the feeble come, but they will not know my tomb: my renown is in the ſong: and my actions ſhall be as a dream to future times.

HIS people gathered around Erragon, as the ſtorms round the ghoſt of night; when he calls

* Comhal the Father of Fingal was ſlain in battle, againſt the tribe of Morni, the very day that Fingal was born; ſo that he may, with propriety, be ſaid to have been *born in the midſt of battles.*

them from the top of Morven, and prepares to pour them on the land of the ſtranger.——He came to the ſhore of Cona, and ſent his bard to the king; to demand the combat of thouſands; or the land of many hills.

FINGAL ſat in his hall with the companions of his youth around him. The young heroes were at the chace, and far diſtant in the deſart. The gray-haired chiefs talked of other times, and of the actions of their youth; when the aged Narthmor * came, the king of ſtreamy Lora.

THIS is no time, begun the chief, to hear the ſongs of other years: Erragon frowns on the coaſt, and lifts ten thouſand ſwords. Gloomy is the king among his chiefs! he is like the darkened moon, amidſt the meteors of night.

COME, ſaid Fingal, from thy hall, thou daughter of my love; come from thy hall, Boſmina †, maid of ſtreamy Morven! Narthmor, take the ſteeds ‡ of the ſtrangers, and attend the daughter of Fingal: let her bid the king of Sora

* Neart-mór, *great ſtrength.* Lora, *noiſy.*

† Boſ-mhina, *ſoft and tender hand.* She was the youngeſt of Fingal's children.

‡ Theſe were probably horſes taken in the incurſions of the Caledonians into the Roman province, which ſeems to be intimated in the phraſe of the *ſteeds of ſtrangers.*

to our feaſt, to Selma's ſhaded wall.——Offer him, O Boſmina, the peace of heroes, and the wealth of generous Aldo: our youths are far diſtant, and age is on our trembling hands.

She came to the hoſt of Erragon, like a beam of light to a cloud.——In her right hand ſhone an arrow of gold; and in her left a ſparkling ſhell, the ſign of Morven's peace.——Erragon brightened in her preſence as a rock, before the ſudden beams of the ſun; when they iſſue from a broken cloud, divided by the roaring wind.

Son of the diſtant Sora, begun the mildly bluſhing maid, come to the feaſt of Morven's king, to Selma's ſhaded walls. Take the peace of heroes, O warrior, and let the dark ſword reſt by thy ſide.---And if thou chuſeſt the wealth of kings, hear the words of the generous Aldo. ——He gives to Erragon an hundred ſteeds, the children of the rein; an hundred maids from diſtant lands; an hundred hawks with fluttering wing, that fly acroſs the ſky. An hundred girdles * ſhall alſo be thine, to bind high-bo-

* Sanctified girdles, till very lately, were kept in many families in the north of Scotland; they were bound about women in labour, and were ſuppoſed to alleviate their pains, and to accelerate the birth. They were impreſſed with ſeveral myſtical figures, and the ceremony of binding them about the woman's waiſt, was accompanied with words and geſtures which ſhewed the cuſtom to have come originally from the druids.

ſomed women; the friends of the births of heroes, and the cure of the ſons of toil.---Ten ſhells ſtudded with gems ſhall ſhine in Sora's towers: the blue water trembles on their ſtars, and ſeems to be ſparkling wine.——They gladdened once the kings of the world *, in the midſt of their echoing halls. Theſe, O hero, ſhall be thine; or thy white-boſomed ſpouſe. ——Lorma ſhall roll her bright eyes in thy halls; though Fingal loves the generous Aldo: ---Fingal!---who never injured a hero, though his arm is ſtrong.

Soft voice of Cona! replied the king, tell him, that he ſpreads his feaſt in vain.——Let Fingal pour his ſpoils around me; and bend beneath my power. Let him give me the ſwords of his fathers, and the ſhields of other times; that my children may behold them in my halls, and ſay, "Theſe are the arms of Fingal."

Never ſhall they behold them in thy halls, ſaid the riſing pride of the maid; they are in the mighty hands of heroes who never yielded in war.---King of the echoing Sora! the ſtorm is gathering on our hills. Doſt thou not forſee the fall of thy people, ſon of the diſtant land?

* The Roman emperors. Theſe ſhells were ſome of the ſpoils of the province.

She came to Selma's silent halls; the king beheld her down-cast eyes. He rose from his place, in his strength, and shook his aged locks. ——He took the sounding mail of Trenmor, and the dark-brown shield of his fathers. Darkness filled Selma's hall, when he stretched his hand to his spear:---the ghosts of thousands were near, and foresaw the death of the people. Terrible joy rose in the face of the aged heroes: they rushed to meet the foe; their thoughts are on the actions of other years: and on the fame of the tomb.

Now the dogs of the chace appeared at Trathal's tomb: Fingal knew that his young heroes followed them, and he stopt in the midst of his course.——Oscar appeared the first;---then Morni's son, and Nemi's race:---Fercuth * shewed his gloomy form: Dermid spread his dark hair on the wind. Ossian came the last. O son of the rock †, I hummed the song of other times: my spear supported my steps over the little streams, and my thoughts were of mighty men. Fingal struck his bossy shield; and gave the dismal sign of war; a thousand

* Fear-cuth, the same with Fergus, *the man of the word*, or a commander of an army.

† The poet addresses himself to the Culdee.

swords

ſwords *, at once unſheathed, gleam on the waving heath. Three gray-haired ſons of ſong raiſe the tuneful, mournful voice.——Deep and dark with ſounding ſteps, we ruſh, a gloomy ridge, along: like the ſhower of a ſtorm when it pours on the narrow vale.

THE king of Morven ſat on his hill: the ſun-beam † of battle flew on the wind: the companions of his youth are near, with all their waving locks of age.——Joy roſe in the heroes eyes when he beheld his ſons in war; when he ſaw them amidſt the lightning of ſwords, and mindful of the deeds of their fathers.——Erragon came on, in his ſtrength, like the roar of a winter ſtream: the battle falls in his courſe, and death is at his ſide.

WHO comes, ſaid Fingal, like the bounding roe, like the hart of echoing Cona? His ſhield glitters on his ſide; and the clang of his armour is mournful.——He meets with Erragon in the ſtrife!---Behold the battle of the chiefs!---it is like the contending of ghoſts in a gloomy ſtorm.

* He ſpake; and to confirm his words out-flew,
Millions of flaming ſwords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the ſudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell. MILTON.

† I have obſerved in a former note, that the ſtandard of Fingal was called the ſun-beam from its being ſtudded with ſtones and gold.

——But falleſt thou, ſon of the hill, and is thy white boſom ſtained with blood? Weep, unhappy Lorma, Aldo is no more.

The king took the ſpear of his ſtrength; for he was ſad for the fall of Aldo: he bent his deathful eyes on the foe; but Gaul met the king of Sora.——Who can relate the fight of the chiefs?---The mighty ſtranger fell.

Sons of Cona! Fingal cried aloud, ſtop the hand of death.---Mighty was he that is now ſo low! and much is he mourned in Sora! The ſtranger will come towards his hall, and wonder why it is ſilent. The king is fallen, O ſtranger, and the joy of his houſe is ceaſed.——Liſten to the ſound of his woods: perhaps his ghoſt is there; but he is far diſtant, on Morven, beneath the ſword of a foreign foe.

Such were the words of Fingal, when the bard raiſed the ſong of peace; we ſtopped our uplifted ſwords, and ſpared the feeble foe. We laid Erragon in that tomb; and I raiſed the voice of grief: the clouds of night came rolling down, and the ghoſt of Erragon appeared to ſome.---His face was cloudy and dark; and an half-formed ſigh is in his breaſt.——Bleſt be thy ſoul, O king of Sora! thine arm was terrible in war!

LORMA ſat, in Aldo's hall, at the light of a flaming oak: the night came, but he did not return; and the ſoul of Lorma is ſad.---What detains thee, hunter of Cona? for thou didſt promiſe to return.——Has the deer been diſtant far; and do the dark winds ſigh, round thee, on the heath? I am in the land of ſtrangers, where is my friend, but Aldo? Come from thy echoing hills, O my beſt beloved!

HER eyes are turned toward the gate, and ſhe liſtens to the ruſtling blaſt. She thinks it is Aldo's tread, and joy riſes in her face;---but ſorrow returns again, like a thin cloud on the moon.——And thou wilt not return, my love? Let me behold the face of the hill. The moon is in the eaſt. Calm and bright is the breaſt of the lake! When ſhall I behold his dogs returning from the chace? When ſhall I hear his voice, loud and diſtant on the wind? Come from thy echoing hills, hunter of woody Cona!

HIS thin ghoſt appeared, on a rock, like the watry beam of the moon, when it ruſhes from between two clouds, and the midnight ſhower is on the field.——She followed the empty form over the heath, for ſhe knew that her hero fell. ---I heard her approaching cries on the wind, like the mournful voice of the breeze, when it ſighs on the graſs of the cave.

SHE

SHE came, ſhe found her hero: her voice was heard no more: ſilent ſhe rolled her ſad eyes; ſhe was pale as a watry cloud, that riſes from the lake, to the beam of the moon.

FEW were her days on Cona: ſhe ſunk into the tomb: Fingal commanded his bards; and they ſung over the death of Lorma. The daughters * of Morven mourned her for one day in the year, when the dark winds of autumn returned.

SON of the diſtant land †, thou dwelleſt in the field of fame: O let thy ſong riſe, at times, in the praiſe of thoſe that fell: that their thin ghoſts may rejoice around thee; and the ſoul of Lorma come on a moon-beam ‡, when thou lieſt down to reſt, and the moon looks into thy cave. Then ſhalt thou ſee her lovely; but the tear is ſtill on her cheek.

* The daughters of Iſrael went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

JUDGES xi. 40.

† The poet addreſſes himſelf to the Culdee.

‡ Be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna, near the window of my reſt; when my thoughts are of peace; and the din of arms is over. FINGAL, B. 1.

CONLATH

CONLATH and CUTHÓNA:

A POEM*.

DID not Oſſian hear a voice? or is it the ſound of days that are no more? Often does the memory of former times come, like the evening ſun, on my ſoul. The noiſe of the

* Conlath was the youngeſt of Morni's ſons, and brother to the celebrated Gaul, who is ſo often mentioned in Oſſian's poems. He was in love with Cuthóna the daughter of Rumar, when Toſcar the ſon of Kinfena, accompanied by Fercuth his friend, arrived, from Ireland, at Mora where Conlath dwelt. He was hoſpitably received, and according to the cuſtom of the times, feaſted, three days, with Conlath. On the fourth he ſet ſail, and coaſting the *iſland of waves*, probably, one of the Hebrides, he ſaw Cuthóna hunting, fell in love with her, and carried her away, by force, in his ſhip. He was forced, by ſtreſs of weather, into I-thona a deſart iſle. In the mean time Conlath, hearing of the rape, ſailed after him, and found him on the point of ſailing for the coaſt of Ireland. They fought; and they, and their followers fell by mutual wounds. Cuthóna did not long ſurvive: for ſhe died of grief the third day after. Fingal, hearing of their unfortunate death, ſent Stormal the ſon of Moran to bury them, but forgot to ſend a bard to ſing the funeral ſong over their tombs. The ghoſt of Conlath came, long after, to Oſſian, to intreat him to tranſmit, to poſterity, his and Cuthóna's fame. For it was the opinion of the times, that the ſouls of the deceaſed were not happy, till their elegies were compoſed by a bard.——Thus is the ſtory of the poem handed down by tradition.

chace

chace is renewed; and, in thought, I lift the ſpear.——But Oſſian did hear a voice; Who art thou, ſon of the night? The ſons of little men are aſleep, and the midnight wind is in my hall. Perhaps it is the ſhield of Fingal that echoes to the blaſt, it hangs in Oſſian's hall, and he feels it ſometimes with his hands.——Yes!---I hear thee, my friend: long has thy voice been abſent from mine ear! What brings thee, on thy cloud, to Oſſian, ſon of the generous Morni? Are the friends of the aged near thee? Where is Oſcar, ſon of fame?---He was often near thee, O Conlath, when the din of battle roſe.

GHOST of CONLATH.

SLEEPS the ſweet voice of Cona, in the midſt of his ruſtling hall? Sleeps Oſſian in his hall, and his friends without their fame? The ſea rolls round the dark I-thona *, and our tombs are not ſeen by the ſtranger. How long ſhall our fame be unheard, ſon of the echoing Morven?

OSSIAN.

O THAT mine eyes could behold thee, as thou ſitteſt, dim, on thy cloud! Art thou like the miſt of Lano; or an half-extinguiſhed meteor?

* I-thonn, *iſland of waves*, one of the uninhabited weſtern iſles.

Of

Of what are the ſkirts of thy robe? Of what is thine airy bow?——But he is gone on his blaſt like the ſhadow of miſt.---Come from thy wall, my harp, and let me hear thy ſound. Let the light of memory riſe on I-thona; that I may behold my friends. And Oſſian does behold his friends, on the dark-blue iſle.---The cave of Thona appears, with its moſſy rocks and bending trees. A ſtream roars at its mouth, and Toſcar bends over its courſe. Fercuth is ſad by his ſide: and the maid * of his love ſits at a diſtance, and weeps. Does the wind of the waves deceive me? Or do I hear them ſpeak?

TOSCAR.

THE night was ſtormy. From their hills the groaning oaks came down. The ſea darkly-tumbled beneath the blaſt, and the roaring waves were climbing againſt our rocks.---The lightning came often and ſhewed the blaſted fern.---Fercuth! I ſaw the ghoſt of night †. Silent he ſtood, on that bank; his robe of miſt

* Cuthóna the daughter of Rumar, whom Toſcar had carried away by force.

† It was long thought, in the north of Scotland, that ſtorms were raiſed by the ghoſts of the deceaſed. This notion is ſtill entertained by the vulgar; for they think that whirlwinds, and ſudden ſqualls of wind are occaſioned by ſpirits, who tranſport themſelves, in that manner, from one place to another.

flew

flew on the wind.---I could behold his tears: an aged man he ſeemed, and full of thought.

FERCUTH.

IT was thy father, O Toſcar; and he foreſees ſome death among his race. Such was his appearance on Cromla, before the great Ma-ronnan * fell.——Ullin! † with thy hills of graſs, how pleaſant are thy vales! Silence is near thy blue ſtreams, and the ſun is on thy fields. Soft is the ſound of the harp in Selama ‡, and pleaſant the cry of the hunter on Cromla. But we are in the dark I-thona, ſurrounded by the ſtorm. The billows lift their white heads above our rocks: and we tremble amidſt the night.

TOSCAR.

WHITHER is the ſoul of battle fled, Fercuth with the locks of age? I have ſeen thee undaunted in danger, and thine eyes burning with joy in the fight. Whither is the ſoul of battle fled? Our fathers never feared.---Go: view the

* Ma-ronnan was the brother of Toſcar: the tranſlator has a poem in his poſſeſſion concerning the extraordinary death of that hero.

† Ulſter in Ireland.

‡ Selamath—*beautiful to behold*, the name of Toſcar's palace, on the coaſt of Ulſter, near the mountain Cromla the ſcene of the epic poem.

ſettling

ſettling ſea: the ſtormy wind is laid. The billows ſtill tremble * on the deep, and ſeem to fear the blaſt. But view the ſettling ſea: morning is gray on our rocks. The ſun will look ſoon from his eaſt; in all his pride of light.

I LIFTED up my ſails, with joy, before the halls of generous Conlath. My courſe was by the iſle of waves, where his love purſued the deer. I ſaw her, like that beam of the ſun that iſſues from the cloud. Her hair was on her heaving breaſt; ſhe, bending forward, drew the bow: her white arm ſeemed, behind her, like the ſnow of Cromla:——Come to my ſoul, I ſaid, thou huntreſs of the iſle of waves! But ſhe ſpends her time in tears, and thinks of the generous Conlath. Where can I find thy peace, Cuthona, lovely maid!

CU-THONA †.

A DISTANT ſteep bends over the ſea, with aged trees and moſſy rocks: the billows roll at its feet: on its ſide is the dwelling of roes. The

* ——————the face of ocean ſleeps,
And a ſtill horror ſaddens all the deeps.
POPE's Homer.

† Cu-thona, *the mourrful ſound of the waves*; a poetical name given her by Oſſian, on account of her mourning to the ſound of the waves; her name in tradition is Gorm-huil, *the blue-eyed maid.*

people

people call it Ardven. There the towers of Mora riſe. There Conlath looks over the ſea for his only love. The daughters of the chace returned, and he beheld their downcaſt eyes. Where is the daughter of Rumar? But they anſwered not.---My peace dwells on Ardven, ſon of the diſtant land!

TOSCAR.

AND Cuthona ſhall return to her peace; to the halls of generous Conlath. He is the friend of Toſcar: I have feaſted in his halls.---Riſe, ye gentle breezes of Ullin, and ſtretch my ſails towards Ardven's ſhores. Cuthona ſhall reſt on Ardven: but the days of Toſcar will be ſad.---I ſhall ſit in my cave in the field of the ſun. The blaſt will ruſtle in my trees, and I ſhall think it is Cuthona's voice. But ſhe is diſtant far, in the halls of the mighty Conlath.

CUTHONA.

OH! what cloud is that? It carries the ghoſts of my fathers. I ſee the ſkirts of their robes, like gray and watry miſt. When ſhall I fall, O Rumar?---Sad Cuthona ſees her death. Will not Conlath behold me, before I enter the narrow houſe? *

* The grave.

OSSIAN.

OSSIAN.

AND he will behold thee, O maid: he comes along the rolling ſea. The death of Toſcar is dark on his ſpear; and a wound is in his ſide. He is pale at the cave of Thona, and ſhews his ghaſtly wound *. Where art thou with thy tears, Cuthona? the chief of Mora dies.—— The viſion grows dim on my mind:---I behold the chiefs no more. But, O ye bards of future times, remember the fall of Conlath with tears: he fell before his day †; and ſadneſs darkened in his hall. His mother looked to his ſhield on the wall, and it was bloody ‡. She knew that her hero died, and her ſorrow was heard on Mora.

ART thou pale on thy rock, Cuthona, beſide the fallen chiefs? The night comes, and the

* ——*inhumati venit imago*
Conjugis, ora modis adtollens pallida miris:
Crudelis aras, trajectaque pectora ferro
Nudavit.—— VIRG.

——the ghoſt appears
Of her unhappy Lord: the ſpectre ſtares,
And with erected eyes his bloody boſom bares.
DRYDEN.

† *Nam quia nec fato, merita nec morte peribat,*
Sed miſera ante diem, &c. VIRG.

‡ It was the opinion of the times, that the arms left by the heroes at home, became bloody the very inſtant their owners were killed, though at ever ſo great a diſtance.

day returns, but none appears to raiſe their tomb. Thou frightneſt the ſcreaming fowls* away, and thy tears for ever flow. Thou art pale as a watry cloud, that riſes from a lake.

THE ſons of the deſart came, and they found her dead. They raiſe a tomb over the heroes; and ſhe reſts at the ſide of Conlath.---Come not to my dreams, O Conlath; for thou haſt received thy fame. Be thy voice far diſtant from my hall; that ſleep may deſcend at night. O that I could forget my friends: till my footſteps ceaſe to be ſeen! till I come among them with joy! and lay my aged limbs in the narrow houſe!

* The ſituation of Cuthona is like that of Rizpah, Saul's miſtreſs, who ſat by her ſons after they had been hanged by the Gibeonites.

And Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took ſackcloth, and ſpread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of the harveſt until water dropped on them out of heaven, and ſuffered neither the birds of the air to reſt on them by day, nor the beaſts of prey by night. 2 SAM. xxi. 10.

CARTHON:

CARTHON*:

A POEM.

A TALE of the times of old! The deeds of days of other years!---The murmur of thy ſtreams, O Lora, brings back the memory of the paſt. The ſound of thy woods, Garmallar,

* This poem is compleat, and the ſubject of it, as of moſt of Oſſian's compoſitions, tragical. In the time of Comhal the ſon of Trathal, and father of the celebrated Fingal, Cleſsámmor the ſon of Thaddu and brother of Morna, Fingal's mother, was driven by a ſtorm into the river Clyde, on the banks of which ſtood Balclutha, a town belonging to the Britons between the walls. He was hoſpitably received by Reuthámir, the principal man in the place, who gave him Moina his only daughter in marriage. Reuda, the ſon of Cormo, a Briton who was in love with Moina, came to Reuthámir's houſe, and behaved haughtily towards Cleſsámmor. A quarrel inſued, in which Reuda was killed; the Britons, who attended him preſſed ſo hard on Cleſsámmor, that he was obliged to throw himſelf into the Clyde, and ſwim to his ſhip. He hoiſted ſail, and the wind being favourable, bore him out to ſea. He often endeavoured to return, and carry off his beloved Moina by night; but the wind continuing contrary, he was forced to deſiſt.

Moina, who had been left with child by her huſband, brought forth a ſon, and died ſoon after.——Reuthámir named the child Carthon, *i. e. the murmur of waves*, from the ſtorm which carried

Garmallar, is lovely in mine ear. Doſt thou not behold, Malvina, a rock with its head of heath? Three aged firs bend from its face; green is the narrow plain at its feet; there the flower of the mountain grows, and ſhakes its white head in the breeze. The thiſtle is there alone, and ſheds its aged beard. Two ſtones, half ſunk in the ground, ſhew their heads of moſs. The deer of the mountain avoids the place, for he beholds the gray ghoſt that guards it *: for the mighty lie, O Malvina, in the narrow plain of the rock. A tale of the times of old! the deeds of days of other years!

ried off Cleſsámmor his father, who was ſuppoſed to have been caſt away. When Carthon was three years old, Comhal the father of Fingal, in one of his expeditions againſt the Britons, took and burnt Balclutha. Reuthámir was killed in the attack: and Carthon was carried ſafe away by his nurſe, who fled farther into the country of the Britons. Carthon, coming to man's eſtate was reſolved to revenge the fall of Balclutha on Comhal's poſterity. He ſet ſail, from the Clyde, and, falling on the coaſt of Morven, defeated two of Fingal's heroes, who came to oppoſe his progreſs. He was, at laſt, unwittingly killed by his father Cleſsámmor, in a ſingle combat. This ſtory is the foundation of the preſent poem, which opens on the night preceding the death of Carthon, ſo that what paſſed before is introduced by way of epiſode. The poem is addreſſed to Malvina the daughter of Toſcar.

* It was the opinion of the times, that deer ſaw the ghoſts of the dead. To this day, when beaſts ſuddenly ſtart without any apparent cauſe, the vulgar think that they ſee the ſpirits of the deceaſed.

WHO comes from the land of ſtrangers, with his thouſands around him? the ſun-beam pours its bright ſtream before him; and his hair meets the wind of his hills. His face is ſettled from war. He is calm as the evening beam that looks, from the cloud of the weſt, on Cona's ſilent vale. Who is it but Comhal's ſon *, the king of mighty deeds! He beholds his hills with joy, and bids a thouſand voices riſe.——Ye have fled over your fields, ye ſons of the diſtant land! The king of the world ſits in his hall, and hears of his people's flight. He lifts his red eye of pride, and takes his father's ſword. Ye have fled over your fields, ſons of the diſtant land!

SUCH were the words of the bards, when they came to Selma's halls.---A thouſand lights † from the ſtranger's land roſe, in the midſt of the people. The feaſt is ſpread around; and the night paſſed away in joy.---Where is the noble Cleſsámmor ‡ ſaid the fair-haired Fingal? Where is the companion of my father, in the days of my joy? Sullen and dark he paſſes his days in

* Fingal returns here, from an expedition againſt the Romans, which was celebrated by Oſſian in a particular poem which is in the tranſlator's poſſeſſion.

† Probably wax-lights; which are often mentioned as carried, among other booty, from the Roman province.

‡ Cleſſamh-mór, *mighty deeds*.

the vale of echoing Lora: but, behold, he comes from the hill, like a ſteed * in his ſtrength, who finds his companions in the breeze; and toſſes his bright mane in the wind.——Bleſt be the ſoul of Cleſsámmor, why ſo long from Selma?

RETURNS the chief, ſaid Cleſsámmor, in the midſt of his fame? Such was the renown of Comhal in the battles of his youth. Often did we paſs over Carun to the land of the ſtrangers:

* Haſt thou given the horſe ſtrength? Haſt thou clothed his neck with thunder? He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his ſtrength. JOB.

Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις κατὰ ϊππος ακοσησας ἐπι φατνη,
Δεσμὸν αποῤῥηξας, &c. HOM. Il. 6.

The wanton courſer thus with reins unbound,
Breaks from his ſtall, and beats the trembling ground;
His head, now freed, he toſſes to the ſkies;
His mane diſhevel'd o'er his ſhoulders flies;
He ſnuffs the females in the diſtant plain,
And ſprings, exulting. POPE.

Qualis ubi abruptis fugit præſepia vinclis
Tandem liber equus, campoque potitus aperto,
—Ille in paſtus armentaque tendit equarum:
——arrectiſque fremit ceruicibus altè
Luxurians, luduntque Iubæ per colla, per armos.
VIRG.

Freed from his keepers, thus with broken reins,
The wanton courſer prances o'er the plains:
Or in the pride of youth o'erleaps the mounds,
And ſnuffs the females in forbidden grounds.
——O'er his ſhoulders flows his waving mane:
He neighs, he ſnorts, he bears his head on high.
DRYDEN.

our

our ſwords returned, not unſtained with blood: nor did the kings of the world rejoice.——Why do I remember the battles of my youth? My hair is mixed with gray. My hand forgets to bend the bow: and I lift a lighter ſpear. O that my joy would return, as when I firſt beheld the maid; the white boſomed daughter of ſtrangers, Moina * with the dark-blue eyes!

TELL, ſaid the mighty Fingal, the tale of thy youthful days. Sorrow, like a cloud on the ſun, ſhades the ſoul of Cleſsámmor. Mournful are thy thoughts, alone, on the banks of the roaring Lora. Let us hear the ſorrow of thy youth, and the darkneſs of thy days.

IT was in the days of peace, replied the great Cleſsámmor, I came, in my bounding ſhip, to Balclutha's † walls of towers. The winds had roared behind my ſails, and Clutha's ‡ ſtreams received my dark-boſomed veſſel. Three days I remained in Reuthámir's halls, and ſaw that

* Moina, *ſoft in temper and perſon.* We find the Britiſh names in this poem derived from the Galic, which is a proof that the ancient language of the whole iſland was one and the ſame.

† Balclutha, *i. e. the town of Clyde*, probably the *Alcluth* of Bede.

‡ Clutha, or Cluäth, the Galic name of the river Clyde, the ſignification of the word is *bending*, in alluſion to the winding courſe of that river. From Clutha is derived its Latin name, Glotta.

beam of light, his daughter. The joy of the ſhell went round, and the aged hero gave the fair. Her breaſts were like foam on the wave, and her eyes like ſtars of light: her hair was dark as the raven's wing: her ſoul was generous and mild. My love for Moina was great; and my heart poured forth in joy.

THE ſon of a ſtranger came; a chief who loved the white-boſomed Moina. His words were mighty in the hall, and he often half-unſheathed his ſword.---Where, he ſaid, is the mighty Comhal, the reſtleſs wanderer * of the heath? Comes he, with his hoſt, to Balclutha, ſince Cleſsámmor is ſo bold?

MY ſoul, I replied, O warrior! burns in a light of its own. I ſtand without fear in the midſt of thouſands, though the valiant are diſtant far.---Stranger! thy words are mighty, for Cleſsámmor is alone. But my ſword trembles by my ſide, and longs to glitter in my hand.---Speak no more of Comhal, ſon of the winding Clutha!

THE ſtrength of his pride aroſe. We fought; he fell beneath my ſword. The banks of Clutha

* The word in the original here rendered by *reſtleſs wanderer*, is *Scuta*, which is the true origin of the *Scoti* of the Romans; an opprobrious name impoſed by the Britons, on the Caledonians, on account of the continual incurſions into their country.

heard

heard his fall, and a thouſand ſpears glittered around. I fought: the ſtrangers prevailed: I plunged into the ſtream of Clutha. My white ſails roſe over the waves, and I bounded on the dark-blue ſea.---Moina came to the ſhore, and rolled the red eye of her tears: her dark hair flew on the wind; and I heard her cries.---Often did I turn my ſhip! but the winds of the Eaſt prevailed. Nor Clutha ever ſince have I ſeen: nor Moina of the dark brown hair.---She fell in Balclutha: for I have ſeen her ghoſt. I knew her as ſhe came through the duſky night, along the murmur of Lora: ſhe was like the new moon * ſeen through the gathered miſt: when the ſky pours down its flaky ſnow, and the world is ſilent and dark.

* *Inter quas Phœniſſa recens a vulnere Dido*
Errabat ſylva in magna: quam Troius heros
Ut primum juxta ſtetit, agnovitque perumbram
Obſcuram, qualem primo qui ſurgere menſe
Aut videt, aut vidiſſe putat per nubila lunam, &c.

VIRG.

Not far from theſe Phœnician Dido ſtood,
Freſh from her wound, her boſom bath'd in blood.
Whom when the Trojan hero hardly knew
Obſcure in ſhades, and with a doubtful view,
Doubtful as he who runs thro' duſky night,
Or thinks he ſees the moon's uncertain light, &c.

DRYDEN.

RAISE,

RAISE*, ye bards, said the mighty Fingal, the praise of unhappy Moina. Call her ghost, with your songs, to our hills; that she may rest with the fair of Morven, the sun-beams of other days, and the delight of heroes of old.---I have seen the walls † of Balclutha, but they were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls: and the voice of the people is heard no more. The stream of Clutha was removed from its place, by the fall of the walls.---The thistle shook, there, its lonely head: the moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out, from the windows, the rank grass of the wall waved round his head.---Desolate is the dwelling of Moina, silence is in the house of her fathers.---Raise the song of mourning, O bards, over the land of strangers. They have but fallen before us: for, one day, we must fall.---Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days?

* The title of this poem, in the original, is *Duan na nlaoi, i. e. The Poem of the Hymns:* probably on account of its many digressions from the subject, all which are in a lyric measure, as this song of Fingal. Fingal is celebrated by the Irish historians for his wisdom in making laws, his poetical genius, and his foreknowledge of events.—O'Flaherty goes so far as to say, that Fingal's laws were extant in his own time.

† The reader may compare this passage with the three last verses of the 13th chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet foretels the destruction of Babylon.

Thou

Thou lookeſt from thy towers to-day; yet a few years, and the blaſt of the deſart comes; it howls in thy empty court, and whiſtles round thy half-worn ſhield.---And let the blaſt of the deſart come! we ſhall be renowned in our day. The mark of my arm ſhall be in the battle, and my name in the ſong of bards.---Raiſe the ſong; ſend round the ſhell: and let joy be heard in my hall.---When thou, ſun of heaven, ſhalt fail! if thou ſhalt fail, thou mighty light! if thy brightneſs is for a ſeaſon, like Fingal; our fame ſhall ſurvive thy beams.

Such was the ſong of Fingal, in the day of his joy. His thouſand bards leaned forward from their ſeats, to hear the voice of the king. It was like the muſic of the harp on the gale of the ſpring.---Lovely were thy thoughts, O Fingal! why had not Oſſian the ſtrength of thy ſoul?---But thou ſtandeſt alone, my father; and who can equal the king of Morven?

The night paſſed away in ſong, and morning returned in joy;---the mountains ſhewed their gray heads; and the blue face of ocean ſmiled. ---The white wave is ſeen tumbling round the diſtant rock; the gray miſt riſes, ſlowly, from the lake. It came, in the figure of an aged man, along the ſilent plain. Its large limbs did not move in ſteps; for a ghoſt ſupported it in mid air.

air. It came towards Selma's hall, and diſſolved in a ſhower of blood.

THE king alone beheld the terrible fight, and he foreſaw the death of the people. He came, in ſilence, to his hall; and took his father's ſpear.---The mail rattled on his breaſt. The heroes roſe around. They looked, in ſilence, on each other, marking the eyes of Fingal.---They ſaw the battle in his face: the death of armies on his ſpear.---A thouſand ſhields, at once, are placed on their arms; and they drew a thouſand ſwords. The hall of Selma brightened around. The clang of arms aſcends.---The gray dogs howl in their place. No word is among the mighty chiefs.---Each marked the eyes of the king; and half aſſumed his ſpear.

SONS of Morven, begun the king, this is no time to fill the ſhell. The battle darkens near us; and death hovers over the land. Some ghoſt, the friend of Fingal, has forewarned us of the foe.——The ſons of the ſtranger come from the darkly-rolling ſea. For, from the water, came the ſign of Morven's gloomy danger. ---Let each * aſſume his heavy ſpear, and gird on

* Ευ μεν τις δορυ ξηξασθω ευ δ' ασπιδα Θεισθω.
HOM. ii. 382.
His ſharpen'd ſpear let every Grecian wield,
And every Grecian fix his brazen ſhield, &c. POPE.

Let

on his father's ſword.---Let the dark helmet riſe on every head; and the mail pour its lightening from every ſide.---The battle gathers like a tempeſt, and ſoon ſhall ye hear the roar of death.

THE hero moved on before his hoſt, like a cloud before a ridge of heaven's fire; when it pours on the ſky of night, and mariners foreſee a ſtorm. On Cona's riſing heath they ſtood: the white-boſomed maids beheld them above like a grove; they foreſaw the death of their youths, and looked towards the ſea with fear.---The white wave deceived them for diſtant ſails, and the tear is on their cheek.

THE ſun roſe on the ſea, and we beheld a diſtant fleet.---Like the miſt of ocean they came: and poured their youth upon the coaſt.---The chief was among them, like the ſtag in the midſt of the herd.---His ſhield is ſtudded with gold, and ſtately ſtrode the king of ſpears.---He moved towards Selma; his thouſands moved behind.

Let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe faſt his orbed ſhield,
Borne ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture right, no drizling ſhower,
But rattling ſtorm of arrows barb'd with fire.

MILTON.

Go,

Go, with thy ſong of peace, ſaid Fingal; go, Ullin, to the king of ſwords. Tell him that we are mighty in battle; and that the ghoſts of our foes are many.---But renowned are they who have feaſted in my halls! they ſhew the arms * of my fathers in a foreign land: the ſons of the ſtrangers wonder, and bleſs the friends of Morven's race; for our names have been heard afar; the kings of the world ſhook in the midſt of their people.

ULLIN went with his ſong. Fingal reſted on his ſpear: he ſaw the mighty foe in his armour: and he bleſt the ſtranger's ſon.

How ſtately art thou, ſon of the ſea! ſaid the king of woody Morven. Thy ſword is a beam of might by thy ſide: thy ſpear is a fir that defies the ſtorm. The varied face of the moon is not broader than thy ſhield.---Ruddy is thy face of youth! ſoft the ringlets of thy hair! ---But this tree may fall; and his memory be forgot!---The daughter of the ſtranger will be ſad, and look to the rolling ſea:---the children will ſay, "We ſee a ſhip; perhaps it is the king "of Balclutha." The tear ſtarts from their mo-

* It was a cuſtom among the ancient Scots, to exchange arms with their guefts, and thoſe arms were preſerved long in the different families, as monuments of the friendſhip which ſubſiſted between their anceſtors.

ther's eye. Her thoughts are of him that ſleeps in Morven.

SUCH were the words of the king, when Ullin came to the mighty Carthon: he threw down the ſpear before him; and raiſed the ſong of peace.

COME to the feaſt of Fingal, Carthon, from the rolling ſea! partake the feaſt of the king, or lift the ſpear of war. The ghoſts of our foes are many: but renowned are the friends of Morven!

BEHOLD that field, O Carthon; many a green hill riſes there, with moſſy ſtones and ruſtling graſs: theſe are the tombs of Fingal's foes, the ſons of the rolling ſea.

DOST thou ſpeak to the feeble in arms, ſaid Carthon, bard of the woody Morven? Is my face pale for fear, ſon of the peaceful ſong? Why, then, doſt thou think to darken my ſoul with the tales of thoſe who fell?---My arm has fought in the battle; my renown is known afar. Go to the feeble in arms, and bid them yield to Fingal.---Have not I ſeen the fallen Balclutha? And ſhall I feaſt with Comhal's ſon? Comhal! who threw his fire in the midſt of my father's hall! I was young, and knew not the cauſe why the virgins wept. The columns of ſmoke pleaſed mine eye, when they roſe above my walls;

walls; I often looked back, with gladneſs, when my friends fled along the hill.——But when the years of my youth came on, I beheld the moſs of my fallen walls: my ſigh aroſe with the morning, and my tears deſcended with night. ---Shall I not fight, I ſaid to my ſoul, againſt the children of my foes? And I will fight, O bard; I feel the ſtrength of my ſoul.

His people gathered around the hero, and drew, at once, their ſhining ſwords. He ſtands, in the midſt, like a pillar of fire; the tear half-ſtarting from his eye; for he thought of the fallen Balclutha, and the crowded pride of his ſoul aroſe. Sidelong he looked up to the hill, where our heroes ſhone in arms; the ſpear trembled in his hand: and, bending forward, he ſeemed to threaten the king.

Shall I, ſaid Fingal to his ſoul, meet, at once, the king? Shall I ſtop him, in the midſt of his courſe, before his fame ſhall ariſe? But the bard, hereafter, may ſay, when he ſees the tomb of Carthon; Fingal took his thouſands, along with him, to battle, before the noble Carthon fell.——No:---bard of the times to come! thou ſhalt not leſſen Fingal's fame. My heroes will fight the youth, and Fingal behold the battle. If he overcomes, I ruſh, in my ſtrength, like the roaring ſtream of Cona.

Who,

WHO, of my heroes, will meet the ſon of the rolling ſea? Many are his warriors on the coaſt: and ſtrong is his aſhen ſpear!

CATHUL * roſe, in his ſtrength, the ſon of the mighty Lormar: three hundred youths attend the chief, the race † of his native ſtreams. Feeble was his arm againſt Carthon, he fell; and his heroes fled.

CONNAL ‡ reſumed the battle, but he broke his heavy ſpear: he lay bound on the field: and Carthon purſued his people.

CLESSAMMOR! ſaid the king || of Morven, where is the ſpear of thy ſtrength? Wilt thou behold Connal bound; thy friend, at the ſtream of Lora? Riſe, in the light of thy ſteel, thou friend of Comhal. Let the youth of Balclutha feel the ſtrength of Morven's race.

HE roſe in the ſtrength of his ſteel, ſhaking his grizly locks. He fitted the ſhield to his ſide; and ruſhed, in the pride of valour.

* Cath-'huil, *the eye of battle.*

† It appears, from this paſſage, that clanſhip was eſtabliſhed, in the days of Fingal, though not on the ſame footing with the preſent tribes in the north of Scotland.

‡ This Connal is very much celebrated, in ancient poetry, for his wiſdom and valour: there is a ſmall tribe ſtill ſubſiſting, in the North, who pretend they are deſcended from him.

|| Fingal did not then know that Carthon was the ſon of Cleſsámmor.

CARTHON ſtood, on that heathy rock, and ſaw the heroes approach. He loved the terrible joy of his face: and his ſtrength, in the locks of age.——Shall I lift that ſpear, he ſaid, that never ſtrikes, but once, a foe? Or ſhall I, with the words of peace, preſerve the warrior's life? Stately are his ſteps of age!---lovely the remnant of his years. Perhaps it is the love of Moina; the father of car-borne Carthon. Often have I heard, that he dwelt at the echoing ſtream of Lora.

SUCH were his words, when Cleſsámmor came, and lifted high his ſpear. The youth received it on his ſhield, and ſpoke the words of peace.——Warrior of the aged locks! Is there no youth to lift the ſpear? Haſt thou no ſon, to raiſe the ſhield before his father, and to meet the arm of youth? Is the ſpouſe of thy love no more? or weeps ſhe over the tombs of thy ſons? Art thou of the kings of men? What will be the fame of my ſword if thou ſhalt fall?

IT will be great, thou ſon of pride! begun the tall Cleſsámmor, I have been renowned in battle; but I never told my name * to a foe. Yield

* To tell one's name to an enemy was reckoned, in thoſe days of heroiſm, a manifeſt evaſion of fighting him; for, if it was once known, that friendſhip ſubſiſted, of old, between the anceſtors

Yield to me, ſon of the wave, and then thou ſhalt know, that the mark of my ſword is in many a field.

I NEVER yielded, king of ſpears! replied the noble pride of Carthon: I have alſo fought in battles; and I behold my future fame. Deſpiſe me not, thou chief of men; my arm, my ſpear is ſtrong. Retire among thy friends, and let young heroes fight.

WHY doſt thou wound my ſoul, replied Cleſsámmor with a tear? Age does not tremble on my hand; I ſtill can lift the ſword. Shall I fly in Fingal's ſight; in the ſight of him I loved? Son of the ſea! I never fled: exalt thy pointed ſpear.

THEY fought, like two contending winds, that ſtrive to roll the wave. Carthon bade his ſpear to err; for he ſtill thought that the foe was the ſpouſe of Moina.——He broke Cleſsámmor's beamy ſpear in twain: and ſeized his ſhining ſword. But as Carthon was binding the chief; the chief drew the dagger of his fathers. He ſaw the foe's uncovered ſide; and opened, there, a wound.

anceſtors of the combatants, the battle immediately ceaſed; and the ancient amity of their forefathers was renewed. *A man who tells his name to his enemy*, was of old an ignominious term for a coward.

FINGAL ſaw Cleſsámmor low: he moved in the ſound of his ſteel. The hoſt ſtood ſilent, in his preſence; they turned their eyes towards the hero.---He came, like the ſullen noiſe of a ſtorm, before the winds ariſe: the hunter hears it in the vale, and retires to the cave of the rock.

CARTHON ſtood in his place: the blood is ruſhing down his ſide: he ſaw the coming down of the king; and his hopes of fame aroſe *; but pale was his cheek: his hair flew looſe, his helmet ſhook on high: the force of Carthon failed; but his ſoul was ſtrong.

FINGAL beheld the heroes blood; he ſtopt the uplifted ſpear. Yield, king of ſwords! ſaid Comhal's ſon; I behold thy blood. Thou haſt been mighty in battle; and thy fame ſhall never fade.

ART thou the king ſo far renowned, replied the car-borne Carthon? Art thou that light of death, that frightens the kings of the world?---But why ſhould Carthon aſk? for he is like the ſtream of his deſart; ſtrong as a river, in his courſe: ſwift as the eagle of the ſky.---O that I had fought with the king; that my fame might

* This expreſſion admits of a double meaning, either that Carthon hoped to acquire glory by killing Fingal; or to be rendered famous by falling by his hand. The laſt is the moſt probable, as Carthon is already wounded.

be great in the ſong! that the hunter, beholding my tomb, might ſay, he fought with the mighty Fingal. But Carthon dies unknown; he has poured out his force on the feeble.

But thou ſhalt not die unknown, replied the king of woody Morven: my bards are many, O Carthon, and their ſongs deſcend to future times. The children of the years to come ſhall hear the fame of Carthon; when they ſit round the burning oak *, and the night is ſpent in the ſongs of old. The hunter, ſitting in the heath, ſhall hear the ruſtling blaſt; and, raiſing his eyes, behold the rock where Carthon fell. He ſhall turn to his ſon, and ſhew the place where the mighty fought; "There the king of Balclutha fought, like the ſtrength of a thouſand ſtreams."

Joy roſe in Carthon's face: he lifted his heavy eyes.——He gave his ſword to Fingal, to lie within his hall, that the memory of Balclutha's king might remain on Morven.---The battle ceaſed along the field, for the bard had ſung the ſong of peace. The chiefs gathered round the falling Carthon, and heard his words, with

* In the north of Scotland, till very lately, they burnt a large trunk of an oak at their feſtivals; it was called *the trunk of the feaſt*. Time had ſo much conſecrated the cuſtom, that the vulgar thought it a kind of ſacrilege to diſuſe it.

ſighs. Silent they leaned on their ſpears, while Balclutha's hero ſpoke. His hair ſighed in the wind, and his words were feeble.

KING of Morven, Carthon ſaid, I fall in the midſt of my courſe. A foreign tomb receives, in youth, the laſt of Reuthámir's race. Darkneſs dwells in Balclutha: and the ſhadows of grief in Crathmo.---But raiſe my remembrance on the banks of Lora: where my fathers dwelt. Perhaps the huſband of Moina will mourn over his fallen Carthon.

HIS words reached the heart of Cleſsámmor: he fell, in ſilence, on his ſon. The hoſt ſtood darkened around: no voice is on the plains of Lora. Night came, and the moon, from the eaſt, looked on the mournful field: but ſtill they ſtood, like a ſilent grove that lifts its head on Gormal, when the loud winds are laid, and dark autumn is on the plain.

THREE days they mourned over Carthon; on the fourth his father died. In the narrow plain of the rock they lie; and a dim ghoſt defends their tomb. There lovely Moina is often ſeen; when the ſun-beam darts on the rock, and all around is dark. There ſhe is ſeen, Malvina, but not like the daughters of the hill. Her robes are from the ſtrangers land; and ſhe is ſtill alone.

FINGAL

FINGAL was ſad for Carthon; he deſired his bards to mark the day, when ſhadowy autumn returned. And often did they mark the day and ſing the hero's praiſe. Who comes ſo dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's ſhadowy cloud? Death is trembling in his hand! his eyes are flames of fire!——Who roars along dark Lora's heath? Who but Carthon king of ſwords? The people fall! ſee! how he ſtrides, like the ſullen ghoſt of Morven!---But there he lies a goodly oak, which ſudden blaſts overturned! When ſhalt thou riſe, Balclutha's joy! lovely car-borne Carthon?——Who comes ſo dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's ſhadowy cloud?

SUCH were the words of the bards, in the day of their mourning: I have accompanied their voice; and added to their ſong. My ſoul has been mournful for Carthon; he fell in the days of his valour: and thou, O Cleſsámmor! where is thy dwelling in the air?---Has the youth forgot his wound? And flies he, on the clouds, with thee?——I feel the ſun, O Malvina, leave me to my reſt. Perhaps they may come to my dreams; I think I hear a feeble voice.---The beam of heaven delights to ſhine on the grave of Carthon: I feel it warm around.

O THOU that rolleſt above *, round as the ſhield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O ſun! thy everlaſting light? Thou comeſt forth, in thy awful beauty, and the ſtars hide themſelves in the ſky; the moon, cold and pale, ſinks in the weſtern wave. But thou thyſelf moveſt alone: who can be a companion of thy courſe! The oaks of the mountains fall: the mountains themſelves decay with years; the ocean ſhrinks and grows again: the moon herſelf is loſt in heaven; but thou art for ever the ſame; rejoicing in the brightneſs of thy courſe. When the world is dark with tempeſts; when thunder rolls, and lightning flies; thou lookeſt in thy beauty, from the clouds, and laugheſt at the ſtorm. But to Oſſian, thou lookeſt in vain; for he beholds thy beams no more; whether thy yellow hair flows on the eaſtern clouds, or thou trembleſt at the gates of the weſt. But thou art perhaps, like me, for a ſeaſon, and thy years will have an end. Thou ſhalt ſleep in thy

* This paſſage is ſomething ſimilar to Satan's addreſs to the Sun in the fourth book of Paradiſe Loſt.

O thou that with ſurpaſſing glory crown'd,
Looks from thy ſole dominion like the god
Of this new world; at whoſe ſight all the ſtars
Hide their diminiſh'd heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
O Sun!

clouds,

clouds, careleſs of the voice of the morning. ——Exult then, O ſun, in the ſtrength of thy youth! Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it ſhines through broken clouds, and the miſt is on the hills; the blaſt of the north is on the plain, the traveller ſhrinks in the midſt of his journey.

THE

THE

DEATH of CUCHULLIN:

A POEM*.

IS the wind on Fingal's ſhield? Or is the voice of paſt times in my hall? Sing on, ſweet voice, for thou art pleaſant, and carrieſt away my night with joy. Sing on, O Bragéla, daughter of car-borne Songlan!

It

* Tradition throws conſiderable light on the hiſtory of Ireland, during the long reign of Fingal, the ſon of Comhal, in Morven.—Arth, the ſon of Cairbre, ſupreme king of Ireland, dying, was ſucceeded by his ſon Cormac, a minor.——The petty kings and chiefs of the tribes met at Temora, the royal palace, in order to chuſe, out of their own number, a guardian to the young king. Diſputes, concerning the choice of a proper perſon, run high, and it was reſolved to end all differences by giving the tuition of the young king to Cuchullin, the ſon of Semo, who had rendered himſelf famous by his great actions, and who reſided, at the time, with Connal, the ſon of Caithbat, in Ulſter.

Cuchullin was but three and twenty years old, when he aſſumed the management of affairs in Ireland: and the invaſion of Swaran happened two years after. In the twenty-ſeventh year of Cuchullin's age, and the third of his adminiſtration, Torlath, the ſon of Cantéla, one of the chiefs of that colony of Belgæ,

It is the white wave of the rock, and not Cuchullin's ſails. Often do the miſts deceive me for the ſhip of my love! when they riſe round ſome

Belgæ, who were in poſſeſſion of the ſouth of Ireland, ſet up for himſelf in Connaught, and advanced towards Temora, in order to dethrone Cormac, who, excepting Feradath, afterwards king of Ireland, was the only one of the Scotch race of kings exiſting in that country. Cuchullin marched againſt him, came up with him at the lake of Lego, and totally defeated his forces. Torlath fell in the battle by Cuchullin's hand; but as he himſelf preſſed too eagerly on the flying enemy, he was mortally wounded by an arrow, and died the ſecond day after.

The good fortune of Cormac fell with Cuchullin: many ſet up for themſelves, and anarchy and confuſion reigned. At laſt Cormac was taken off; and Cairbar, lord of Atha, one of the competitors for the throne, having defeated all his rivals, became ſole monarch of Ireland.——The family of Fingal, who were in the intereſt of Cormac's family, were reſolved to deprive Cairbar of the throne he had uſurped; in particular, Oſcar the ſon of Oſſian had determined to revenge the death of Cathol, his friend, who had been aſſaſſinated by Cairbar.—The threats of Oſcar reached Cairbar's ears: he invited him in a friendly manner to a feaſt which he had prepared at the royal palace of Temora, reſolving to pick a quarrel, and have ſome pretext for killing him.

The quarrel happened; the followers of both fought, and and Cairbar and Oſcar fell by mutual wounds: in the mean time Fingal arrived from Scotland with an army, defeated the friends of Cairbar, and re-eſtabliſhed the family of Cormac in the poſſeſſion of the kingdom.——The preſent poem concerns the death of Cuchullin. It is, in the original, called *Duan loch Leigo*, i. e. *The Poem of Lego's Lake*, and is an epiſode introduced in a great poem, which celebrated the laſt expedition of Fingal into Ireland. The greateſt part of the poem is loſt, and nothing remains but ſome epiſodes, which a few old people in the north of Scotland retain on memory.——Cuchullin is the moſt famous champion

ſome ghoſt, and ſpread their gray ſkirts on the wind. Why doſt thou delay thy coming, ſon of the generous Semo?---Four times has autumn returned with its winds, and raiſed the ſeas of Togorma *, ſince thou haſt been in the roar of battles, and Bragéla diſtant far.---Hills of the iſle of miſt! when will ye anſwer to his hounds? ——But ye are dark in your clouds, and ſad Bragéla calls in vain. Night comes rolling down: the face of ocean fails. The heath-cock's head is beneath his wing: the hind ſleeps with the hart of the deſart. They ſhall riſe with the morning's light, and feed on the moſſy ſtream. But my tears return with the ſun, my

champion in the Iriſh traditions and poems; in them he is always called the *redoubtable Cuchullin*; and the fables concerning his ſtrength and valour are innumerable. Oſſian thought his expedition againſt the Fir-bolg, or Belgæ of Britain, a ſubject fit for an epic poem; which was extant till of late, and was called *Tora-na-tana*, or a *Diſpute about Poſſeſſions*, as the war which was the foundation of it, was commenced by the Britiſh Belgæ, who inhabited Ireland, in order to extend their territories.—The fragments that remain of this poem are animated with the genuine ſpirit of Oſſian; ſo that there can be no doubt that it was of his compoſition.

* Togorma, *i. e. The iſland of blue waves*, one of the Hebrides, was ſubject to Connal, the ſon of Caithbat, Cuchullin's friend.—He is ſometimes called the ſon of Colgar, from one of that name who was the founder of the family.——Connal, a few days before the news of Torlath's revolt came to Temora, had ſailed to Togorma, his native iſle; where he was detained by contrary winds during the war in which Cuchullin was killed.

ſighs

ſighs come on with the night. When wilt thou come in thine arms, O chief of moſſy Tura?

PLEASANT is thy voice in Oſſian's ear, daughter of car-borne Sorglan! But retire to the hall of ſhells; to the beam of the burning oak.——Attend to the murmur of the ſea: it rolls at Dunſcaich's walls: let ſleep deſcend on thy blue eyes, and the hero come to thy dreams.

CUCHULLIN ſits at Lego's lake, at the dark rolling of waters. Night is around the hero; and his thouſands ſpread on the heath: a hundred oaks burn in the midſt, the feaſt of ſhells is ſmoaking wide.---Carril ſtrikes the harp, beneath a tree; his gray locks glitter in the beam; the ruſtling blaſt of night is near, and lifts his aged hair.---His ſong is of the blue Togorma, and of its chief, Cuchullin's friend.

WHY art thou abſent, Connal, in the day of the gloomy ſtorm? The chiefs of the ſouth have convened againſt the car-borne Cormac: the winds detain thy ſails, and thy blue waters roll around thee. But Cormac is not alone: the ſon of Semo fights his battles. Semo's ſon his battles fights! the terror of the ſtranger! he that

is

is like the vapour of death *, ſlowly borne by ſultry winds. The ſun reddens in its preſence, the people fall around.

SUCH was the ſong of Carril, when a ſon of the foe appeared; he threw down his pointleſs ſpear, and ſpoke the words of Torlath, Torlath the chief of heroes, from Lego's ſable ſurge: he that led his thouſands to battle, againſt car-borne Cormac, Cormac, who was diſtant far, in Temora's † echoing halls: he learned to bend the bow of his fathers; and to lift the ſpear. Nor long didſt thou lift the ſpear, mildly-ſhining beam of youth! death ſtands dim behind thee, like the darkened half of the moon behind its growing light.

CUCHULLIN roſe before the bard ‡, that came from generous Torlath; he offered him the

* Οἵη δ' ἐκ νεφέων ἐρεβεννὴ φαίνεται ἀὴρ
Καύματος ἐξ ἀνέμοιο δυσαέος ὀρνυμένοιο.

HOM. Il. 5.

As vapours blown by Auſter's ſultry breath,
Pregnant with plagues, and ſhedding ſeeds of death,
Beneath the rage of burning Sirius riſe,
Choke the parch'd earth, and blacken all the ſkies.

POPE.

† The royal palace of the Iriſh kings; Teamhrath according to ſome of the bards.

‡ The bards were the heralds of ancient times; and their perſons were ſacred on account of their office. In later times they abuſed that privilege; and as their perſons were inviolable, they ſatyriſed

the ſhell of joy, and honoured the ſon of ſongs. Sweet voice of Lego! he ſaid, what are the words of Torlath? Comes he to our feaſt or battle, the car-borne ſon of Cantéla * ?

He comes to thy battle, replied the bard, to the ſounding ſtrife of ſpears.——When morning is gray on Lego, Torlath will fight on the plain: and wilt thou meet him, in thine arms, king of the iſle of miſt? Terrible is the ſpear of Torlath! it is a meteor of night. He lifts it, and the people fall: death ſits in the lightning of his ſword.

Do I fear, replied Cuchullin, the ſpear of car-borne Torlath? He is brave as a thouſand heroes; but my ſoul delights in war. The ſword reſts not by the ſide of Cuchullin, bard of the times of old! Morning ſhall meet me on the plain, and gleam on the blue arms of Semo's ſon.---But ſit thou, on the heath, O bard! and let us hear thy voice: partake of the joyful ſhell; and hear the ſongs of Temora.

This is no time, replied the bard, to hear the ſong of joy; when the mighty are to meet

ſatyriſed and lampooned ſo freely thoſe who were not liked by their patrons, that they became a public nuiſance. Screened under the character of heralds, they groſly abuſed the enemy when he would not accept the terms they offered.

* Cean-teola', *head of a family.*

in

in battle like the ſtrength of the waves of Lego. Why art thou ſo dark, Slimora*! with all thy ſilent woods? No green ſtar trembles on thy top; no moon-beam on thy ſide. But the meteors of death are there, and the gray watry forms of ghoſts. Why art thou dark, Slimora! with thy ſilent woods?

He retired, in the ſound of his ſong; Carril accompanied his voice. The muſic was like the memory of joys that are paſt, pleaſant and mournful to the ſoul. The ghoſts of departed bards heard it from Slimora's ſide. Soft ſounds ſpread along the wood, and the ſilent valleys of night rejoice.——So, when he ſits in the ſilence of noon, in the valley of his breeze, the humming of the mountain bee comes to Oſſian's ear: the gale drowns it often in its courſe; but the pleaſant ſound returns again.

Raise, ſaid Cuchullin, to his hundred bards, the ſong of the noble Fingal: that ſong which he hears at night, when the dreams of his reſt deſcend: when the bards ſtrike the diſtant harp, and the faint light gleams on Selma's walls. Or let the grief of Lara riſe, and the ſighs of the mother of Calmar†, when he was ſought, in vain,

* Slia'-mór, *great hill*.

† Calmar the ſon of Matha. His death is related at large, in the third book of Fingal. He was the only ſon of Matha; and the

vain, on his hills; and ſhe beheld his bow in the hall.——Carril, place the ſhield of Caithbat on that branch; and let the ſpear of Cuchullin be near; that the ſound of my battle may riſe with the gray beam of the eaſt.

THE hero leaned on his father's ſhield: the ſong of Lara roſe. The hundred bards were diſtant far: Carril alone is near the chief. The words of the ſong were his; and the ſound of his harp was mournful.

ALCLETHA * with the aged locks! mother of car-borne Calmar! why doſt thou look towards the deſart, to behold the return of thy ſon? Theſe are not his heroes, dark on the heath: nor is that the voice of Calmar: it is but the diſtant grove, Alcletha! but the roar of the mountain wind!

WHO † bounds over Lara's ſtream, ſiſter of the noble Calmar? Does not Alclétha behold his

the family was extinct in him.—The ſeat of the family was on the banks of the river Lara, in the neighbourhood of Lego, and probably near the place where Cuchullin lay; which circumſtance ſuggeſted to him, the lamentation of Alclétha over her ſon.

* Ald-cla'tha, *decaying beauty:* probably a poetical name given the mother of Calmar, by the bard himſelf.

† Alcletha ſpeaks. Calmar had promiſed to return, by a certain day, and his mother and his ſiſter Alona are repreſented by the bard as looking, with impatience, towards that quarter where they expected Calmar would make his firſt appearance.

ſpear? But her eyes are dim! Is it not the ſon of Matha, daughter of my love?

It is but an aged oak, Alclétha! replied the lovely weeping Alona *; it is but an oak, Alclétha, bent over Lara's ſtream. But who comes along the plain? ſorrow is in his ſpeed. He lifts high the ſpear of Calmar. Alclétha, it is covered with blood!

But it is covered with the blood of foes †, ſiſter of car-borne Calmar! his ſpear never returned unſtained with blood ‡, nor his bow from the ſtrife of the mighty. The battle is conſumed in his preſence: he is a flame of death, Alona!——Youth || of the mournful ſpeed!, where is the ſon of Alclétha? Does he return with his fame? in the midſt of his echoing ſhields?——Thou art dark and ſilent!---Calmar is then no more. Tell me not, warrior, how he fell, for I cannot hear of his wound.——

Why doſt thou look towards the deſart, mother of car-borne Calmar?——

* Alûine, *exquiſitely beautiful.*

† Aclétha ſpeaks.

‡ From the blood of the ſlain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan returned not back, and the ſword of Saul returned not empty. 2 Sam. i. 22.

|| She addreſſes herſelf to Larnir, Calmar's friend, who had returned with the news of his death.

SUCH was the ſong of Carril, when Cuchullin lay on his ſhield: the bards reſted on their harps, and ſleep fell ſoftly around.——The ſon of Semo was awake alone; his ſoul was fixed on the war.——The burning oaks began to decay; faint red light is ſpread around.---A feeble voice is heard: the ghoſt of Calmar came. He ſtalked in the beam. Dark is the wound in his ſide. His hair is diſordered and looſe. Joy ſits darkly on his face: and he ſeems to invite Cuchullin to his cave.

SON of the cloudy night! ſaid the riſing chief of Erin; Why doſt thou bend thy dark eyes on me, ghoſt of the car-borne Calmar? Wouldeſt thou frighten me, O Matha's ſon! from the battles of Cormac? Thy hand was not feeble in war; neither was thy voice * for peace. How art thou changed, chief of Lara! if thou now doſt adviſe to fly!——But, Calmar, I never fled. I never feared † the ghoſts of the deſart. Small is their knowledge, and weak their hands; their dwelling is in the wind.——But my ſoul grows in danger, and rejoices in the noiſe of ſteel. Retire thou to thy cave; thou art not

* See Calmar's ſpeech, in the firſt book of Fingal.

† See Cuchullin's reply to Connal, concerning Crugal's ghoſt. Fing. b. 2.

Calmar's ghoſt; he delighted in battle, and his arm was like the thunder of heaven.

He retired in his blaſt with joy, for he had heard the voice of his praiſe. The faint beam of the morning roſe, and the ſound of Caithbat's buckler ſpread. Green Ullin's warriors convened, like the roar of many ſtreams.---The horn of war is heard over Lego; the mighty Torlath came.

Why doſt thou come with thy thouſands, Cuchullin, ſaid the chief of Lego. I know the ſtrength of thy arm, and thy ſoul is an unextinguiſhed fire.---Why fight we not on the plain, and let our hoſts behold our deeds? Let them behold us like roaring waves, that tumble round a rock: the mariners haſten away, and look on their ſtrife with fear.

Thou riſeſt, like the ſun, on my ſoul, replied the ſon of Semo. Thine arm is mighty, O Torlath! and worthy of my wrath. Retire, ye men of Ullin, to Slimora's ſhady ſide; behold the chief of Erin, in the day of his fame.——Carril! tell to mighty Connal, if Cuchullin muſt fall, tell him I accuſed the winds which roar on Togorma's waves.---Never was he abſent in battle, when the ſtrife of my fame aroſe.---Let this ſword be before Cormac, like the beam of heaven:

heaven: let his counſel found in Temora in the day of danger.

He ruſhed, in the ſound of his arms, like the terrible ſpirit of Loda*, when he comes in the roar of a thouſand ſtorms, and ſcatters battles from his eyes.---He ſits on a cloud over Lochlin's ſeas: his mighty hand is on his ſword, and the winds lift his flaming locks.---So terrible was Cuchullin in the day of his fame.---Torlath fell by his hand, and Lego's heroes mourned.---They gather around the chief like the clouds of the deſart.---A thouſand ſwords roſe at once; a thouſand arrows flew; but he ſtood like a rock in the midſt of a roaring ſea.——They fell around; he ſtrode in blood: dark Slimora echoed wide.---The ſons of Ullin came, and the battle ſpread over Lego.---The chief of Erin overcame; he returned over the field with his fame.——

* Loda, in the third book of Fingal, is mentioned as a place of worſhip in Scandinavia: by the *ſpirit of Loda*, the poet probably means Odin, the great deity of the northern nations. He is deſcribed here with all his terrors about him, not unlike Mars, as he is introduced in a ſimile, in the ſeventh Iliad.

——— ——— οἷός τε πελώριος ἔρχεται Ἄρης
Ος τ' εἰσιν πόλεμόνδε μετ' ἀνέρας, οὔτε κρονίων
Θυμοβόρῳ ἔριδι μενεὶ ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι.
So ſtalks in arms the griſly god of Thrace,
When Jove to puniſh faithleſs men prepares,
And gives whole nations to the waſte of wars.

POPE.

But pale he returned! The joy of his face was dark. He rolled his eyes in ſilence.---The ſword hung, unſheathed, in his hand, and his ſpear bent at every ſtep.

Carril, ſaid the king in ſecret, the ſtrength of Cuchullin fails. My days are with the years that are paſt: and no morning of mine ſhall ariſe.---They ſhall ſeek me at Temora, but I ſhall not be found. Cormac will weep in his hall, and ſay, "Where is Tura's chief?"---But my name is renowned! my fame in the ſong of bards.——The youth will ſay in ſecret, O let me die as Cuchullin died; renown cloathed him like a robe; and the light of his fame is great. Draw the arrow from my ſide; and lay Cuchullin beneath that oak. Place the ſhield of Caithbat near, that they may behold me amidſt the arms of my fathers.---

And is the ſon of Semo fallen *, ſaid Carril with a ſigh?——Mournful are Tura's walls; and ſorrow dwells at Dunſcaich.---Thy ſpouſe

* The Iriſh hiſtorians have placed Cuchullin in the firſt century.—The tranſlator has given his reaſons for fixing him in the third, in the diſſertation which is prefixed to this collection. In other particulars the accounts of Keating and O'Flaherty coincide pretty nearly with Oſſian's poems, and the traditions of the Highlands and Iſles. They ſay that he was killed in the twenty-ſeventh year of his age, and they give him a great character for his wiſdom and valour.

is left alone in her youth, the ſon * of thy love is alone.---He ſhall come to Bragela, and aſk her why ſhe weeps.---He ſhall lift his eyes to the wall, and ſee his father's ſword.---Whoſe ſword is that? he will ſay: and the ſoul of his mother is ſad. Who is that, like the hart of the deſart, in the murmur of his courſe?---His eyes look wildly round in ſearch of his friend.——Connal, ſon of Colgar, where haſt thou been, when the mighty fell? Did the ſeas of Togorma roll round thee? Was the wind of the ſouth in thy ſails? The mighty have fallen in battle, and thou waſt not there.---Let none tell it in Selma, nor in Morven's woody land; Fingal will be ſad, and the ſons of the deſart mourn.

By the dark rolling waves of Lego they raiſed the hero's tomb.——Luäth †, at a diſtance, lies, the companion of Cuchullin, at the chace.

* Conlœch, who was afterwards very famous for his great exploits in Ireland. He was ſo remarkable for his dexterity in handling the javelin, that when a good markſman is deſcribed, it has paſſed into a proverb, in the north of Scotland, *He is unerring as the arm of Conloch.*

† It was of old, the cuſtom to bury the favourite dog near the maſter. This was not peculiar to the ancient Scots, for we find it practiſed by many other nations in their ages of heroiſm. ——There is a ſtone ſhewn ſtill at Dunſcaich in the iſle of Sky, to which Cuchullin commonly bound his dog Luäth.—The ſtone goes by his name to this day.

——Bleſt * be thy ſoul, ſon of Semo; thou wert mighty in battle.---Thy ſtrength was like the ſtrength of a ſtream: thy ſpeed like the eagle's † wing.——Thy path in the battle was terrible: the ſteps of death were behind thy ſword.——Bleſt be thy ſoul, ſon of Semo; car-borne chief of Dunſcaich!

THOU haſt not fallen by the ſword of the mighty, neither was thy blood on the ſpear of the valiant.---The arrow came, like the ſting of death in a blaſt: nor did the feeble hand, which drew the bow, perceive it. Peace to thy ſoul, in thy cave, chief of the iſle of Miſt!

THE mighty are diſperſed at Temora: there is none in Cormac's hall. The king mourns in his youth, for he does not behold thy coming. The ſound of thy ſhield is ceaſed: his foes are gathering round. Soft be thy reſt in thy cave, chief of Erin's wars!

BRAGELA will not hope thy return, or ſee thy ſails in ocean's foam.——Her ſteps are not on the ſhore: nor her ear open to the voice of thy

* This is the ſong of the bards over Cuchullin's tomb. Every ſtanza cloſes with ſome remarkable title of the hero, which was always the cuſtom in funeral elegies.—The verſe of the ſong is a lyric meaſure, and it was of old ſung to the harp.

† They were ſwifter than eagles, they were ſtronger than lions. 2 Sam. i. 23.

rowers.

rowers.---She ſits in the hall of ſhells, and ſees the arms of him that is no more.---Thine eyes are full of tears, daughter of car-borne Sorglan! ——Bleſt be thy ſoul in death, O chief of ſhady Cromla!

DAR-THULA,

DAR-THULA:

A POEM*.

DAUGHTER of heaven †, fair art thou! the ſilence of thy face is pleaſant. Thou comeſt forth in lovelineſs: the ſtars attend thy blue ſteps in the eaſt. The clouds rejoice in thy preſence,

* It may not be improper here, to give the ſtory which is the foundation of this poem, as it is handed down by tradition.—Uſnoth, lord of Etha, which is probably that part of Argyleſhire which is near Loch Eta, an arm of the ſea in Lorn, had three ſons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan by Sliſſáma, the daughter of Semo and ſiſter to the celebrated Cuchullin. The three brothers, when very young, were ſent over to Ireland, by their father, to learn the uſe of arms, under their uncle Cuchullin, who made a great figure in that kingdom. They were juſt landed in Ulſter when the news of Cuchullin's death arrived. Nathos, though very young, took the command of Cuchullin's army, made head againſt Cairbar the uſurper, and defeated him in ſeveral battles. Cairbar at laſt having found means to murder Cormac the lawful king, the army of Nathos ſhifted ſides, and he himſelf was obliged to return into Ulſter, in order to paſs over into Scotland.

Dar-thula, the daughter of Colla, with whom Cairbar was in love, reſided, at that time, in Seláma a caſtle in Ulſter: ſhe ſaw, fell in love, and fled with Nathos; but a ſtorm riſing at ſea, they were unfortunately driven back on that part of the coaſt of Ulſter, where Cairbar was encamped with his army, waiting for Fingal, who

preſence, O moon, and brighten their dark-brown ſides. Who is like thee in heaven, daughter of the night? The ſtars are aſhamed in thy preſence, and turn aſide their green, ſparkling eyes.---Whither doſt thou retire from thy courſe, when the darkneſs * of thy countenance grows? Haſt thou thy hall like Oſſian? Dwelleſt thou in the ſhadow of grief? Have thy ſiſters fallen from heaven? Are they who rejoiced with thee, at night, no more?---Yes!---they have fallen, fair light! and thou doſt often retire to mourn.——But thou thyſelf ſhalt fail, one night; and leave thy blue path in heaven. The ſtars will then lift their green heads: they who were aſhamed in thy preſence, will rejoice.

who meditated an expedition into Ireland, to re-eſtabliſh the Scotch race of kings on the throne of that kingdom. The three brothers, after having defended themſelves, for ſome time, with great bravery, were overpowered and ſlain, and the unfortunate Dar-thula killed herſelf upon the body of her beloved Nathos.

Oſſian opens the poem, on the night preceding the death of the ſons of Uſnoth, and brings in, by way of epiſode, what paſſed before. He relates the death of Dar-thula differently from the common tradition; his account is the moſt probable, as ſuicide ſeems to have been unknown in thoſe early times: for no traces of it are found in the old poetry.

† The addreſs to the moon is very beautiful in the original. It is in a lyric meaſure, and appears to have been ſung to the harp.

* The poet means the moon in her wane.

THOU

THOU art now clothed with thy brightneſs: look from thy gates in the ſky. Burſt the cloud, O wind, that the daughter of night may look forth, that the ſhaggy mountains may brighten, and the ocean roll its blue waves in light.

NATHOS * is on the deep, and Althos that beam of youth, Ardan is near his brothers; they move in the gloom of their courſe. The ſons of Uſnoth move in darkneſs, from the wrath of car-borne Cairbar †.

WHO is that dim, by their ſide? the night has covered her beauty. Her hair ſighs on ocean's wind; her robe ſtreams in duſky wreaths. She is like the fair ſpirit of heaven, in the midſt of his ſhadowy miſt. Who is it but Dar-thula ‡, the firſt of Erin's maids? She has fled from the love of Cairbar, with the car-borne Nathos. But the winds deceive thee, O Dar-thula; and deny the woody Etha to thy ſails. Theſe are not thy

* Nathos ſignifies *youthful*, Ailthos, *exquiſite beauty*, Ardan, *pride*.

† Cairbar, who murdered Cormac king of Ireland, and uſurped the throne. He was afterwards killed by Oſcar the ſon of Oſſian in a ſingle combat. The poet, upon other occaſions, gives him the epithet of red-haired.

‡ Dar-thúla, or Dart-'huile, *a woman with fine eyes*. She was the moſt famous beauty of antiquity. To this day, when a woman is praiſed for her beauty, the common phraſe is, that *ſhe is as lovely as Dar-thula*.

mountains,

mountains, Nathos, nor is that the roar of thy climbing waves. The halls of Cairbar are near; and the towers of the foe lift their heads. Ullin ſtretches its green head into the ſea; and Tura's bay receives the ſhip. Where have ye been, ye ſouthern winds! when the ſons of my love were deceived? But ye have been ſporting on plains, and purſuing the thiſtle's beard. O that ye had been ruſtling in the ſails of Nathos, till the hills of Etha roſe! till they roſe in their clouds, and ſaw their coming chief! Long haſt thou been abſent, Nathos! and the day of thy return is paſt *.

But the land of ſtrangers ſaw thee, lovely: thou waſt lovely in the eyes of Dar-thula. Thy face was like the light of the morning, thy hair like the raven's wing. Thy ſoul was generous and mild, like the hour of the ſetting ſun. Thy words were the gale of the reeds, or the gliding ſtream of Lora.

But when the rage of battle roſe, thou waſt like a ſea in a ſtorm; the clang of arms was terrible: the hoſt vaniſhed at the ſound of thy courſe.——It was then Dar-thula beheld thee,

* That is, the day appointed by deſtiny. We find no deity in Oſſian's poetry, if fate is not one; of that he is very full in ſome of his poems in the tranſlator's hands.

from

from the top of her moſſy tower: from the tower of Seláma *, where her fathers dwelt.

LOVELY art thou, O ſtranger! ſhe ſaid, for her trembling ſoul aroſe. Fair art thou in thy battles, friend of the fallen Cormac! † Why doſt thou ruſh on, in thy valour, youth of the ruddy look? Few are thy hands, in battle, againſt the car-borne Cairbar!---O that I might be freed of his love! ‡ that I might rejoice in the preſence of Nathos!——Bleſt are the rocks of Etha; they will behold his ſteps at the chace! they will ſee his white boſom, when the winds lift his raven hair!

SUCH were thy words, Dar-thula, in Seláma's moſſy towers. But, now, the night is round thee: and the winds have deceived thy ſails. The winds have deceived thy ſails, Dar-thula: their bluſtering ſound is high. Ceaſe a little while, O north wind, and let me hear the voice

* The poet does not mean that Seláma which is mentioned as the ſeat of Tóſcar in Ulſter, in the poem of Conlath and Cuthona. The word in the original ſignifies either *beautiful to behold*, or a place *with a pleaſant or wide proſpect*. In thoſe times, they built their houſes upon eminences, to command a view of the country, and to prevent their being ſurprized: many of them, on that account, were called Seláma. The famous Selma of Fingal is derived from the ſame root.

† Cormac the young king of Ireland, who was murdered by Cairbar.

‡ That is, of the love of Cairbar.

of the lovely. Thy voice is lovely, Dar-thula, between the ruſtling blaſts.

ARE theſe the rocks of Nathos, and the roar of his mountain-ſtreams? Comes that beam of light from Uſnoth's nightly hall? The miſt rolls around, and the beam is feeble: but the light of Dar-thula's ſoul is the car-borne chief of Etha! Son of the generous Uſnoth, why that broken ſigh? Are we not in the land of ſtrangers, chief of echoing Etha?

THESE are not the rocks of Nathos, he replied, nor the roar of his ſtreams. No light comes from Etha's halls, for they are diſtant far. We are in the land of ſtrangers, in the land of car-borne Cairbar. The winds have deceived us, Dar-thula. Ullin lifts here her green hills.---Go towards the north, Althos; be thy ſteps, Ardan, along the coaſt; that the foe may not come in darkneſs, and our hopes of Etha fail.——

I WILL go towards that moſſy tower, and ſee who dwells about the beam.---Reſt, Dar-thula, on the ſhore! reſt in peace, thou beam of light! the ſword of Nathos is around thee, like the lightning of heaven.

HE went. She ſat alone, and heard the rolling of the wave. The big tear is in her eye; and ſhe looks for the car-borne Nathos.---Her

ſoul

ſoul trembles at the blaſt. And ſhe turns her ear towards the tread of his feet.——The tread of his feet is not heard. Where art thou, ſon of my love! The roar of the blaſt is around me. Dark is the cloudy night.——But Nathos does not return. What detains thee, chief of Etha? ---Have the foes met the hero in the ſtrife of the night?---

He returned, but his face was dark: he had ſeen his departed friend.---It was the wall of Tura, and the ghoſt of Cuchullin ſtalked there. The ſighing of his breaſt was frequent; and the decayed flame of his eyes terrible. His ſpear was a column of miſt: the ſtars looked dim through his form. His voice was like hollow wind in a cave: and he told the tale of grief. The ſoul of Nathos was ſad, like the ſun * in the day of miſt, when his face is watry and dim.

Why art thou ſad, O Nathos, ſaid the lovely daughter of Colla? Thou art a pillar of light to Dar-thula: the joy of her eyes is in Etha's

* *Conditus in nubem, medioque refugerit orbe;*

Virg.

—Thro' miſts he ſhoots his fullen beams,
Frugal of light, in looſe and ſtraggling ſtreams.

Dryden.

chief.

chief. Where is my friend *, but Nathos? My father reſts in the tomb. Silence dwells on Seláma: ſadneſs ſpreads on the blue ſtreams of my land. My friends have fallen, with Cormac. The mighty were ſlain in the battle of Ullin.

EVENING darkened on the plain. The blue ſtreams failed before mine eyes. The unfrequent blaſt came ruſtling in the tops of Seláma's groves. My ſeat was beneath a tree on the walls of my fathers. Truthil paſt before my ſoul; the brother of my love; he that was abſent † in battle againſt the car-borne Cairbar.

BENDING on his ſpear, the gray-haired Colla came: his downcaſt face is dark, and ſorrow dwells in his ſoul. His ſword is on the ſide of the hero: the helmet of his fathers on his head. ---The battle grows in his breaſt. He ſtrives to hide the tear.

DAR-THULA, he ſighing ſaid, thou art the laſt of Colla's race. Truthil is fallen in battle. The king ‡ of Seláma is no more.——Cairbar

* ——— σὺ γὰρ ἐτ' ἄλλη
Ἐσσι θαλπωρή,———
———ὃδέ μοι ἐστὶ πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ.
HOM. vi. 411.

† The family of Colla preſerved their loyalty to Cormac long after the death of Cuchullin.

‡ It is very common, in Oſſian's poetry, to give the title of King to every chief that was remarkable for his valour.

comes, with his thouſands, towards Seláma's walls.---Colla will meet his pride, and revenge his ſon. But where ſhall I find thy ſafety, Dar-thula with the dark-brown hair! thou art lovely as the ſun-beam of heaven, and thy friends are low!

AND is the ſon of battle fallen? I ſaid with a burſting ſigh. Ceaſed the generous ſoul of Truthil to lighten through the field?---My ſafety, Colla, is in that bow; I have learned to pierce the deer. Is not Cairbar like the hart of the deſart, father of fallen Truthil?

THE face of age brightened with joy: and the crouded tears of his eyes poured down. The lips of Colla trembled. His gray beard whiſtled in the blaſt. Thou art the ſiſter of Truthil, he ſaid, and thou burneſt in the fire of his ſoul. Take, Dar-thula, take that ſpear, that brazen ſhield, that burniſhed helmet: they are the ſpoils of a warrior: a ſon * of early youth.——When the light riſes on Seláma, we go to meet the car-borne Cairbar.——But keep thou near the arm of Colla; beneath the ſhadow of my ſhield. Thy father, Dar-thula, could once de-

* The poet, to make the ſtory of Dar-thula's arming herſelf for battle, more probable, makes her armour to be that of a very young man, otherwiſe it would ſhock all belief, that ſhe, who was very young, ſhould be able to carry it.

fend

fend thee; but age is trembling on his hand.—— The ſtrength of his arm has failed, and his ſoul is darkened with grief.

We paſſed the night in ſorrow. The light of morning roſe. I ſhone in the arms of battle. The gray-haired hero moved before. The ſons of Seláma convened around the ſounding ſhield of Colla. But few were they in the plain, and their locks were gray. The youths had fallen with Truthil, in the battle of car-borne Cormac.

Companions of my youth! ſaid Colla, it was not thus you have ſeen me in arms. It was not thus I ſtrode to battle, when the great Confadan fell. But ye are laden with grief. The darkneſs of age comes like the miſt of the deſart. My ſhield is worn with years; my ſword is fixed * in its place. I ſaid to my ſoul, thy evening ſhall be calm, and thy departure like a fading light. But the ſtorm has returned; I bend like an aged oak. My boughs are fallen on Seláma, and I tremble in my place.—— Where art thou, with thy fallen heroes, O my car-borne Truthil! Thou anſwereſt not from thy ruſhing blaſt; and the ſoul of thy father is ſad.

* It was the cuſtom of thoſe times, that every warrior at a certain age, or when he became unfit for the field, fixed his arms, in the great hall, where the tribe feaſted, upon joyful occaſions. He was afterwards never to appear in battle; and this ſtage of life was called the *time of fixing of the arms.*

But I will be ſad no more, Cairbar or Colla muſt fall. I feel the returning ſtrength of my arm. My heart leaps at the ſound of battle.

THE hero drew his ſword. The gleaming blades of his people roſe. They moved along the plain. Their gray hair ſtreamed in the wind.---Cairbar ſat, at the feaſt, in the ſilent plain of Lona *. He ſaw the coming of the heroes, and he called his chiefs to battle.

WHY † ſhould I tell to Nathos, how the ſtrife of battle grew! I have ſeen thee, in the midſt of thouſands, like the beam of heaven's fire; it is beautiful, but terrible; the people fall in its red courſe.——The ſpear of Colla flew, for he remembered the battles of his youth. An arrow came with its ſound, and pierced the hero's ſide. He fell on his echoing ſhield. My ſoul ſtarted with fear; I ſtretched my buckler over him; but my heaving breaſt was ſeen.

* Lona, *a marſhy plain*. It was the cuſtom, in the days of Oſſian, to feaſt after a victory. Cairbar had juſt provided an entertainment for his army, upon the defeat of Truthil the ſon of Colla, and the reſt of the party of Cormac, when Colla and his aged warriors arrived to give him battle.

† The poet avoids the deſcription of the battle of Lona, as it would be improper in the mouth of a woman, and could have nothing new, after the numerous deſcriptions, of that kind, in his other poems. He, at the ſame time, gives an opportunity to Dar-thula to paſs a fine compliment on her lover.

Cairbar came, with his ſpear, and he beheld Seláma's maid: joy roſe on his dark-brown face; he ſtayed the lifted ſteel. He raiſed the tomb of Colla; and brought me weeping to Seláma. He ſpoke the words of love, but my ſoul was ſad. I ſaw the ſhields of my fathers, and the ſword of car-borne Truthil. I ſaw the arms of the dead, and the tear was on my cheek.

THEN thou didſt come, O Nathos: and gloomy Cairbar fled. He fled like the ghoſt of the deſart before the morning's beam. His hoſts were not near: and feeble was his arm againſt thy ſteel.

WHY * art thou ſad, O Nathos? ſaid the lovely maid of Colla.

I HAVE met, replied the hero, the battle in my youth. My arm could not lift the ſpear, when firſt the danger roſe; but my ſoul brightened before the war, as the green narrow vale, when the ſun pours his ſtreamy beams, before he hides his head in a ſtorm. My ſoul brightened in danger before I ſaw Seláma's fair; before I ſaw thee, like a ſtar, that ſhines on the hill, at night; the cloud ſlowly comes, and threatens the lovely light.

* It is uſual with Oſſian, to repeat, at the end of the epiſodes, the ſentence which introduced them. It brings back the mind of the reader to the main ſtory of the poem.

WE are in the land of the foe, and the winds have deceived us, Dar-thula! the ſtrength of our friends is not near, nor the mountains of Etha. Where ſhall I find thy peace, daughter of mighty Colla! The brothers of Nathos are brave: and his own ſword has ſhone in war. But what are the ſons of Uſnoth to the hoſt of car-borne Cairbar! O that the winds had brought thy ſails, Oſcar * king of men! thou didſt promiſe to come to the battles of fallen Cormac. Then would my hand be ſtrong as the flaming arm of death. Cairbar would tremble in his halls, and peace dwell round the lovely Dar-thula. But why doſt thou fall, my ſoul? The ſons of Uſnoth may prevail.

AND they will prevail, O Nathos, ſaid the riſing ſoul of the maid: never ſhall Dar-thula behold the halls of gloomy Cairbar. Give me thoſe arms of braſs, that glitter to that paſſing meteor; I ſee them in the dark-boſomed ſhip. Dar-thula will enter the battle of ſteel.---Ghoſt of the noble Colla! do I behold thee on that cloud? Who is that dim beſide thee? It is the car-borne Truthil. Shall I behold the halls of

* Oſcar, the ſon of Oſſian, had long reſolved on the expedition, into Ireland, againſt Cairbar, who had aſſaſſinated his friend Cathol, the ſon of Moran, an Iriſhman of noble extraction, and in the intereſt of the family of Cormac.

him

him that ſlew Seláma's chief! No: I will not behold them, ſpirits of my love!

Joy roſe in the face of Nathos, when he heard the white boſomed maid. Daughter of Seláma! thou ſhineſt on my ſoul. Come, with thy thouſands, Cairbar! the ſtrength of Nathos is returned. And thou, O aged Uſnoth, ſhalt not hear that thy ſon has fled. I remember thy words on Etha; when my ſails begun to riſe: when I ſpread them towards Ullin, towards the moſſy walls of Tura. Thou goeſt, he ſaid, O Nathos, to the king of ſhields; to Cuchullin chief of men who never fled from danger. Let not thine arm be feeble: neither be thy thoughts of flight; leſt the ſon of Semo ſay that Etha's race are weak. His words may come to Uſnoth, and ſadden his ſoul in the hall.——The tear was on his cheek. He gave this ſhining ſword.

I came to Tura's bay: but the halls of Tura were ſilent. I looked around, and there was none to tell of the chief of Dunſcaich. I went to the hall of his ſhells, where the arms of his fathers hung. But the arms were gone, and aged Lamhor * ſat in tears.

Whence are the arms of ſteel, ſaid the riſing Lamhor? The light of the ſpear has long been

* Lamh-mhor, *mighty hand.*

abſent from Tura's duſky walls.---Come ye from the rolling ſea? Or from the mournful halls of Temora *.

We come from the ſea, I ſaid, from Uſnoth's riſing towers. We are the ſons of Slis-sáma †, the daughter of car-borne Semo. Where is Tura's chief, ſon of the ſilent hall? But why ſhould Nathos aſk? for I behold thy tears. How did the mighty fall, ſon of the lonely Tura?

He fell not, Lamhor replied, like the ſilent ſtar of night, when it ſhoots through darkneſs and is no more. But he was like a meteor that falls in a diſtant land; death attends its red courſe, and itſelf is the ſign of wars.——Mournful are the banks of Lego, and the roar of ſtreamy Lara! There the hero fell, ſon of the noble Uſnoth.

And the hero fell in the midſt of ſlaughter, I ſaid with a burſting ſigh. His hand was ſtrong in battle; and death was behind his ſword.---We came to Lego's mournful banks. We found his

* Temora was the royal palace of the ſupreme kings of Ireland. It is here called mournful, on account of the death of Cormac, who was murdered there by Cairbar who uſurped his throne.

† Slis-ſeamha, *ſoft boſom*. She was the wife of Uſnoth and daughter of Semo the chief of the *iſle of miſt*.

riſing

riſing tomb. His companions in battle are there; his bards of many ſongs. Three days we mourned over the hero: on the fourth, I ſtruck the ſhield of Caithbat. The heroes gathered around with joy, and ſhook their beamy ſpears.

CORLATH was near with his hoſt, the friend of car-borne Cairbar. We came like a ſtream by night, and his heroes fell. When the people of the valley roſe, they ſaw their blood with morning's light. But we rolled away, like wreaths of miſt, to Cormac's echoing hall. Our ſwords roſe to defend the king. But Temora's halls were empty. Cormac had fallen in his youth. The king of Erin was no more.

SADNESS ſeized the ſons of Ullin, they ſlowly, gloomily retired: like clouds that, long having threatened rain, retire behind the hills. The ſons of Uſnoth moved, in their grief, towards Tura's ſounding bay. We paſſed by Selâma, and Cairbar retired like Lano's miſt, when it is driven by the winds of the deſart.

IT was then I beheld thee, O maid, like the light of Etha's ſun. Lovely is that beam, I ſaid, and the crowded ſigh of my boſom roſe. Thou cameſt in thy beauty, Dar-thula, to Etha's mournful chief.——But the winds have deceived us, daughter of Colla, and the foe is near.

YES!

YES!---the foe is near, ſaid the ruſtling ſtrength of Althos*. I heard their clanging arms on the coaſt, and ſaw the dark wreaths of Erin's ſtandard. Diſtinct is the voice of Cairbar†, and loud as Cromla's falling ſtream. He had ſeen the dark ſhip on the ſea, before the duſky night came down. His people watch on Lena's ‡ plain, and lift ten thouſand ſwords.

AND let them lift ten thouſand ſwords, ſaid Nathos with a ſmile. The ſons of car-borne Uſnoth will never tremble in danger. Why doſt thou roll with all thy foam, thou roaring ſea of Ullin? Why do ye ruſtle, on your dark wings, ye whiſtling tempeſts of the ſky?---Do ye think, ye ſtorms, that ye keep Nathos on the coaſt? No: his ſoul detains him, children of the night!——Althos! bring my father's arms: thou ſeeſt them beaming to the ſtars. Bring the

* Althos had juſt returned from viewing the coaſt of Lena, whither he had been ſent by Nathos, the beginning of the night.

† Cairbar had gathered an army, to the coaſt of Ulſter, in order to oppoſe Fingal, who prepared for an expedition into Ireland to re-eſtabliſh the houſe of Cormac on the throne, which Cairbar had uſurped. Between the wings of Cairbar's army was the bay of Tura, into which the ſhip of the ſons of Uſnoth was driven: ſo that there was no poſſibility of their eſcaping.

‡ The ſcene of the preſent poem is nearly the ſame with that of the epic poem in this collection. The heath of Lena and Tura are often mentioned.

ſpear

ſpear of Semo*, it ſtands in the dark-boſomed ſhip.

He brought the arms. Nathos clothed his limbs in all their ſhining ſteel. The ſtride of the chief is lovely: the joy of his eyes terrible. He looks towards the coming of Cairbar. The wind is ruſtling in his hair. Dar-thula is ſilent at his ſide: her look is fixed on the chief. She ſtrives to hide the riſing ſigh, and two tears ſwell in her eyes.

Althos! ſaid the chief of Etha, I ſee a cave in that rock. Place Dar-thula there: and let thy arm be ſtrong. Ardan! we meet the foe, and call to battle gloomy Cairbar. O that he came in his ſounding ſteel, to meet the ſon of Uſnoth!——Dar-thula! if thou ſhalt eſcape, look not on the falling Nathos. Lift thy ſails, O Althos, towards the echoing groves of Etha.

Tell to the chief†, that his ſon fell with fame; that my ſword did not ſhun the battle. Tell him I fell in the midſt of thouſands, and let the joy of his grief be great. Daughter of Colla! call the maids to Etha's echoing hall.

* Semo was grandfather to Nathos by the mother's ſide. The ſpear mentioned here was given to Uſnoth on his marriage, it being the cuſtom then for the father of the lady to give his arms to his ſon-in-law. The ceremony uſed upon theſe occaſions is mentioned in other poems.

† Uſnoth.

Let

Let their ſongs ariſe from Nathos, when ſhadowy autumn returns.---O that the voice of Cona * might be heard in my praiſe! then would my ſpirit rejoice in the midſt of my mountain winds.

And my voice ſhall praiſe thee, Nathos chief of the woody Etha! The voice of Oſſian ſhall riſe in thy praiſe, ſon of the generous Uſnoth! Why was I not on Lena, when the battle roſe? Then would the ſword of Oſſian have defended thee, or himſelf have fallen low.

We ſat, that night, in Selma round the ſtrength of the ſhell. The wind was abroad, in the oaks; the ſpirit of the mountain † ſhrieked. The blaſt came ruſtling through the hall, and gently touched my harp. The ſound was mournful and low, like the ſong of the tomb. Fingal heard it firſt, and the crowded ſighs of his boſom roſe.——Some of my heroes are low, ſaid the gray-haired king of Morven. I hear the ſound of death on the harp of my ſon. Oſſian, touch the ſounding ſtring; bid the ſorrow riſe; that their ſpirits may fly with joy to Morven's woody hills.

* Oſſian, the ſon of Fingal, is, often, poetically called the voice of Cona.

† By the ſpirit of the mountain is meant that deep and melancholy ſound which precedes a ſtorm; well known to thoſe who live in a high country.

I TOUCHED the harp before the king, the ſound was mournful and low. Bend forward from your clouds, I ſaid, ghoſts of my fathers! bend; lay by the red terror of your courſe, and receive the falling chief; whether he comes from a diſtant land, or riſes from the rolling ſea. Let his robe of miſt be near; his ſpear that is formed of a cloud. Place an half-extinguiſhed meteor by his ſide, in the form of the hero's ſword. And, oh! let his countenance be lovely, that his friends may delight in his preſence. Bend from your clouds, I ſaid, ghoſts of my fathers! bend.

SUCH was my ſong, in Selma, to the lightly-trembling harp. But Nathos was on Ullin's ſhore, ſurrounded by the night; he heard the voice of the foe amidſt the roar of tumbling waves. Silent he heard their voice, and reſted on his ſpear.

MORNING roſe, with its beams; the ſons of Erin appear; like gray rocks, with all their trees, they ſpread along the coaſt. Cairbar ſtood, in the midſt, and grimly ſmiled when he ſaw the foe.

NATHOS ruſhed forward, in his ſtrength; nor could Dar-thula ſtay behind. She came with the hero, lifting her ſhining ſpear. And who are theſe, in their armour, in the pride of youth?

youth? Who but the ſons of Uſnoth, Althos and dark-haired Ardan?

COME, ſaid Nathos, come! chief of the high Temora! Let our battle be on the coaſt for the white-boſomed maid. His people are not with Nathos; they are behind that rolling ſea. Why doſt thou bring thy thouſands againſt the chief of Etha? Thou didſt fly * from him, in battle, when his friends were around him.

YOUTH of the heart of pride, ſhall Erin's king fight with thee? Thy fathers were not among the renowned, nor of the kings of men. Are the arms of foes in their halls? Or the ſhields of other times? Cairbar is renowned in Temora, nor does he fight with little men.

THE tear ſtarts from car-borne Nathos; he turned his eyes to his brothers. Their ſpears flew, at once, and three heroes lay on earth. Then the light of their ſwords gleamed on high; the ranks of Erin yield; as a ridge of dark clouds before a blaſt of wind.

THEN Cairbar ordered his people, and they drew a thouſand bows. A thouſand arrows flew; the ſons of Uſnoth fell. They fell like three young oaks which ſtood alone on the hill; the traveller ſaw the lovely trees, and wondered how

* He alludes to the flight of Cairbar from Selâma.

they grew so lonely; the blast of the desart came, by night, and laid their green heads low; next day he returned, but they were withered, and the heath was bare.

DAR-THULA stood in silent grief, and beheld their fall: no tear is in her eye: but her look is wildly sad. Pale was her cheek; her trembling lips broke short an half-formed word. Her dark hair flew on the wind.——But gloomy Cairbar came. Where is thy lover now? the car-borne chief of Etha? Hast thou beheld the halls of Usnoth? Or the dark-brown hills of Fingal? My battle had roared on Morven, did not the winds meet Dar-thula. Fingal himself would have been low, and sorrow dwelling in Selma.

HER shield fell from Dar-thula's arm, her breast of snow appeared. It appeared, but it was stained with blood for an arrow was fixed in her side. She fell on the fallen Nathos, like a wreath of snow. Her dark hair spreads on his face, and their blood is mixing round.

DAUGHTER of Colla! thou art low! said Cairbar's hundred bards; silence is at the blue streams of Selàma, for Truthil's* race have failed. When wilt thou rise in thy beauty, first of Erin's

* Truthil was the founder of Dar-thula's family.

maids?

maids? Thy ſleep is long in the tomb, and the morning diſtant far. The ſun ſhall not come to thy bed, and ſay, Awake * Darthula! awake, thou firſt of women! the wind of ſpring is abroad. The flowers ſhake their heads on the green hills, the woods wave their growing leaves. Retire, O ſun, the daughter of Colla is aſleep. She will not come forth in her beauty: ſhe will not move, in the ſteps of her lovelineſs.

SUCH was the ſong of the bards, when they raiſed the tomb. I ſung, afterwards, over the grave, when the king of Morven came; when he came to green Ullin to fight with car-borne Cairbar.

* Riſe up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is paſt, the rain is over, and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of ſinging is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines, *with* the tender grape, give a *good* ſmell. Ariſe, my love, my fair one, and come away.

SOLOMON's Song.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM*.

THE blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees ſhake their duſky heads in the breeze; and gray torrents pour their noiſy ſtreams.---Two green

* Though the hiſtory which is the foundation of the preſent poem, was given in the notes on the two pieces preceding, it may not be here improper to recapitulate ſome part of what has been ſaid.—Immediately after the death of Cuchullin, Cairbar, lord of Atha, openly ſet up for himſelf in Connaught, and having privately murdered young king Cormac, became, without oppoſition, ſole monarch of Ireland. The murder of Cormac was ſo much reſented by Fingal, that he reſolved on an expedition into Ireland againſt Cairbar. Early intelligence of his deſigns came to Cairbar, and he had gathered the tribes together into Ulſter, to oppoſe Fingal's landing; at the ſame time his brother Cathmor kept himſelf with an army near Temora.—This Cathmor is one of the fineſt characters in the old poetry. His humanity, generoſity, and hoſpitality, were unparalleled: in ſhort, he had no fault, but too much attachment to ſo bad a brother as Cairbar.—The preſent poem has its name from Temora, the royal palace of the Iriſh kings, near which the laſt and deciſive battle was fought between Fingal and Cathmor. What has come to the

green hills, with their aged oaks, ſurround a narrow plain. The blue courſe of the mountain-ſtream is there; Cairbar ſtands on its banks. ——His ſpear ſupports the king: the red eyes of his fear are ſad. Cormac riſes in his ſoul, with all his ghaſtly wounds. The gray form of

tranſlator's hands, in a regular connection, is little more than the opening of the poem.—This work appears, from the ſtory of it, which is ſtill preſerv'd, to have been one of the greateſt of Oſſian's compoſitions. The variety of the characters makes it intereſting; and the war, as it is carried on by Fingal and Cathmor, affords inſtances of the greateſt bravery, mixed with incomparably generous actions and ſentiments. One is at a loſs for which ſide to declare himſelf: and often wiſhes, when both commanders march to battle, that both may return victorious. At length the good fortune of Fingal preponderates, and the family of Cormac are re-eſtabliſhed on the Iriſh throne.

The Iriſh traditions relate the affair in another light, and exclaim againſt Fingal for appointing thirty judges, or rather tyrants, at Temora, for regulating the affairs of Ireland. They pretend to enumerate many acts of oppreſſion committed by thoſe judges; and affirm, that both they and a part of Fingal's army, which was left in Ireland to enforce their laws, were at laſt expelled the kingdom.—Thus the Iriſh traditions, ſay the hiſtorians of that nation. It is ſaid, however, that thoſe gentlemen ſometimes create facts, in order afterwards to make remarks upon them; at leaſt, that they adopt for real facts, the traditions of their bards, when they throw luſtre on the ancient ſtate of their country.

The preſent poem opens in the morning. Cairbar is repreſented as retired from the reſt of the Iriſh chiefs, and tormented with remorſe for the murder of Cormac, when news was brought him of Fingal's landing. What paſſed, preceding that day, and is neceſſary to be known for carrying on the poem, is afterwards introduced by way of epiſode.

the

the youth appears in the midſt of darkneſs, and the blood pours from his airy ſides.---Cairbar thrice threw his ſpear on earth; and thrice he ſtroked his beard. His ſteps are ſhort; he often ſtopt: and toſſed his ſinewy arms. He is like a cloud in the deſart; that varies its form to every blaſt: the valleys are ſad around, and fear, by turns, the ſhower.

THE king, at length, reſumed his ſoul, and took his pointed ſpear. He turned his eyes towards Lena *. The ſcouts of the ocean appeared. They appeared with ſteps of fear, and often looked behind. Cairbar knew that the mighty were near, and called his gloomy chiefs. The ſounding ſteps of his heroes came. They drew, at once, their ſwords. There Morlath † ſtood with darkened face. Hidalla's buſhy hair ſighs in the wind. Red-haired Cormar bends on his ſpear, and rolls his ſide-long-looking eyes. Wild is the look of Malthos from beneath two ſhaggy brows.---Foldath ſtands like an oozy rock, that covers its dark ſides with foam; his

* The ſcene deſcribed here is nearly that of the epic poem, Fingal. In this neighbourhood alſo the ſons of Uſnoth were killed.

† Mór-lath, *great in the day of battle.* Hidalla', *wildly looking hero.* Cor-mar, *expert at ſea.* Malth-os, *ſlow to ſpeak.* Fol-dath, *generous.*

ſpear is like Slimora's fir, that meets the wind of heaven. His ſhield is marked with the ſtrokes of battle; and his red eye deſpiſes danger. Theſe and a thouſand other chiefs ſurrounded car-borne Cairbar, when the ſcout of ocean came, Mor-annal *, from ſtreamy Lena.---His eyes hang forward from his face, his lips are trembling, pale.

Do the chiefs of Erin ſtand, he ſaid, ſilent as the grove of evening? Stand they, like a ſilent wood, and Fingal on the coaſt? Fingal, who is terrible in battle, the king of ſtreamy Morven.

And haſt thou ſeen the warrior, ſaid Cairbar with a ſigh? Are his heroes many on the coaſt? Lifts he the ſpear of battle? Or comes the king in peace?

He comes not in peace, O Cairbar: for I have ſeen his forward ſpear †. It is a meteor of death: the blood of thouſands is on its ſteel. ——He came firſt to the ſhore, ſtrong in the

* Mór-annail, *ſtrong breath*; a very proper name for a ſcout.

† Mor-annal here alludes to the particular appearance of Fingal's ſpear.——If a man, upon his firſt landing in a ſtrange country, kept the point of his ſpear forward, it denoted in thoſe days that he came in a hoſtile manner, and accordingly he was treated as an enemy; if he kept the point behind him, it was a token of friendſhip, and he was immediately invited to the feaſt, according to the hoſpitality of the times.

gray hair of age. Full roſe his ſinewy limbs, as he ſtrode in his might. That ſword is by his ſide which gives no ſecond* wound. His ſhield is terrible, like the bloody moon, when it riſes in a ſtorm.——Then came Oſſian king of ſongs; and Morni's ſon, the firſt of men. Connal leaps forward on his ſpear: Dermid ſpreads his dark-brown locks.---Fillan bends his bow: Fergus ſtrides in the pride of youth. Who is that with aged locks? A dark ſhield is on his ſide. His ſpear trembles at every ſtep; and age is on his limbs. He bends his dark face to the ground; the king of ſpears is ſad!——It is Uſnoth, O Cairbar, coming to revenge his ſons. He ſees green Ullin with tears, and he remembers the tombs of his children. But far before the reſt, the ſon of Oſſian comes, bright in the ſmiles of youth, fair as the firſt beams of the ſun. His long hair falls on his back.---His dark brows are half hid beneath his helmet of ſteel. His ſword hangs looſe on the hero's ſide. His ſpear glitters as he moves. I fled from his terrible eyes, king of high Temora!

* This was the famous ſword of Fingal, made by Luno, a ſmith of Lochlin, and after him poetically called the *ſon of Luno:* it is ſaid of this ſword, that it killed a man at every ſtroke; and that Fingal never uſed it, but in times of the greateſt danger.

THEN fly, thou feeble man, ſaid the gloomy wrath of Foldath: fly to the grey ſtreams of thy land, ſon of the little ſoul! Have not I ſeen that Oſcar? I beheld the chief in battle. He is of the mighty in danger: but there are others who lift the ſpear.---Erin has many ſons as brave: yes---more brave, O car-borne Cairbar?---Let Foldath meet him in the ſtrength of his courſe, and ſtop this mighty ſtream.---My ſpear is covered with the blood of the valiant; my ſhield is like Tura's wall.

SHALL Foldath alone meet the foe, replied the dark-browed Malthos? Are not they numerous on our coaſt, like the waters of a thouſand ſtreams? Are not theſe the chiefs who vanquiſhed Swaran, when the ſons of Erin fled? And ſhall Foldath meet their braveſt hero? Foldath of the heart of pride! take the ſtrength of the people by thy ſide; and let Malthos come. My ſword is red with ſlaughter, but who has heard my words? *

SONS of green Erin, begun the mild Hidalla, let not Fingal hear your words: leaſt the foe rejoice, and his arm be ſtrong in the land.---Ye are brave, O warriors, and like the tempeſts of the deſart; they meet the rocks without fear, and

* That is, who has heard my vaunting? He intended the expreſſion as a rebuke to the ſelf-praiſe of Foldath.

overturn

overturn the woods in their courſe.---But let us move in our ſtrength, and flow as a gathered cloud, when the winds drive it from behind.——Then ſhall the mighty tremble, and the ſpear drop from the hand of the valiant.---We ſee the cloud of death, they will ſay; and their faces will turn pale. Fingal will mourn in his age; and ſay that his fame is ceaſed.——Morven will behold his chiefs no more: the moſs of years ſhall grow in Selma.

CAIRBAR heard their words, in ſilence, like the cloud of a ſhower: it ſtands dark on Cromla, till the lightning burſts its ſide; the valley gleams with red light; the ſpirits of the ſtorm rejoice. ——So ſtood the ſilent king of Temora; at length his words are heard.

SPREAD the feaſt on Lena: and let my hundred bards attend. And thou, red-hair'd Olla, take the harp of the king. Go to Oſcar king of ſwords, and bid him to our feaſt. To-day we feaſt and hear the ſong; to-morrow break the ſpears. Tell him that I have raiſed the tomb of Cathol *; and that my bards have ſung to his ghoſt.

* Cathol the ſon of Maronnan, or Moran, was murdered by Cairbar, for his attachment to the family of Cormac. He had attended Oſcar to the *war of Inis-thona*, where they contracted a great friendſhip for one another. Oſcar, immediately after the death of Cathol, had ſent a formal challenge to Cairbar, which

ghoſt.---Tell him that Cairbar has heard his fame at the ſtream of diſtant Carun *.

CATHMOR † is not here, the generous brother of Cairbar; he is not here with his thouſands, and our arms are weak. Cathmor is a foe to ſtrife at the feaſt: his ſoul is bright as the ſun. But Cairbar ſhall fight with Oſcar, chiefs of the high Temora! His words for Cathol were many; and the wrath of Cairbar burns. He ſhall fall on Lena: and my fame ſhall riſe in blood.

THE faces of the heroes brightened. They ſpread over Lena's heath. The feaſt of ſhells is prepared. The ſongs of the bards aroſe.

WE heard ‡ the voice of joy on the coaſt, and we thought that the mighty Cathmor came. Cathmor

he prudently declined, but conceived a ſecret hatred againſt Oſcar, and had beforehand contrived to kill him at the feaſt, to which he here invites him.

* He alludes to the battle of Oſcar againſt Caros, *king of ſhips*; who is ſuppoſed to be the ſame with Caraufius the uſurper.

† Cath-mór, *great in battle.* Cairbar takes advantage of his brother's abſence, to perpetrate his ungenerous deſigns againſt Oſcar; for the noble ſpirit of Cathmor, had he been preſent, would not have permitted the laws of that hoſpitality, for which he was ſo renowned himſelf, to be violated. The brothers form a contraſt: we do not deteſt the mean ſoul of Cairbar more, than we admire the diſintereſted and generous mind of Cathmor.

‡ Fingal's army heard the joy that was in Cairbar's camp. The character given of Cathmor is agreeable to the times.

Some,

Cathmor the friend of ſtrangers! the brother of red-haired Cairbar. But their ſouls were not the ſame: for the light of heaven was in the boſom of Cathmor. His towers roſe on the banks of Atha: ſeven paths led to his halls. Seven chiefs ſtood on thoſe paths, and called the ſtranger to the feaſt! But Cathmor dwelt in the wood to avoid the voice of praiſe.

OLLA came with his ſongs. Oſcar went to Cairbar's feaſt. Three hundred heroes attended the chief, and the clang of their arms is terrible. The gray dogs bounded on the heath, and their

Some, through oſtentation, were hoſpitable; and others fell naturally into a cuſtom handed down from their anceſtors. But what marks ſtrongly the character of Cathmor, is his averſion to praiſe; for he is repreſented to dwell in a wood to avoid the thanks of his gueſts; which is ſtill a higher degree of generoſity than that of Axylus in Homer: for the poet does not ſay, but the good man might, at the head of his own table, have heard with pleaſure the praiſe beſtowed on him by the people he entertained.

Ἄξιλον δ' ἄρ' ἔπεφνε βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης
Τευθρανιδην, ὃς ναιεν ἐϋκτιμένῃ ἐν Ἀρισβῇ,
Ἀφνειὸς βιοτοιο, φιλοξεῖνος δ' ἦν ἀνθρώποισι·
Πάντας γὰρ φιλέεσκεν, ὁδῷ ἔπι οἰκία ναίων.

HOM. 6. 12.

Next Teuthra's ſon diſtain'd the ſands with blood,
Axylus, hoſpitable, rich and good:
In fair Ariſbe's walls, his native place,
He held his ſeat; a friend to human race.
Faſt by the road, his ever open door
Oblig'd the wealthy, and reliev'd the poor. POPE.

howling

howling is frequent. Fingal ſaw the departure of the hero: the ſoul of the king was ſad. He dreads the gloomy Cairbar: but who of the race of Trenmor feared the foe?

My ſon lifted high the ſpear of Cormac: an hundred bards met him with ſongs. Cairbar concealed with ſmiles the death that was dark in his ſoul. The feaſt is ſpread, the ſhells reſound; joy brightens the face of the hoſt. But it was like the parting beam of the ſun, when he is to hide his red head, in a ſtorm.

Cairbar roſe in his arms; darkneſs gathers on his brow. The hundred harps ceaſed at once. The clang * of ſhields is heard. Far diſtant on the heath Olla raiſed his ſong of woe. My ſon knew the ſign of death; and riſing ſeized his ſpear.

Oscar! ſaid the dark-red Cairbar, I behold the ſpear † of Erin's kings. The ſpear of Te-

* When a chief was determined to kill a man that was in his power already, it was uſual to ſignify, that his death was intended, by the ſound of a ſhield ſtruck with the blunt end of a ſpear; at the ſame time that a bard at a diſtance raiſed the *death-ſong*. A ceremony of another kind was long uſed in Scotland upon ſuch occaſions. Every body has heard that a bull's head was ſerved up to Lord Douglas in the caſtle of Edinburgh, as a certain ſignal of his approaching death.

† Cormac, the ſon of Arth, had given the ſpear, which is here the foundation of the quarrel, to Oſcar when he came to congratulate him, upon Swaran's being expelled from Ireland.

mora

mora * glitters in thy hand, ſon of the woody Morven! It was the pride of an hundred kings, the death of heroes of old. Yield it, ſon of Oſſian, yield it to car-borne Cairbar.

SHALL I yield, Oſcar replied, the gift of Erin's injured king: the gift of fair-haired Cormac, when Oſcar ſcattered his foes? I came to his halls of joy, when Swaran fled from Fingal. Gladneſs roſe in the face of youth: he gave the ſpear of Temora. Nor did he give it to the feeble, O Cairbar, neither to the weak in ſoul. The darkneſs of thy face is not a ſtorm to me; nor are thine eyes the flames of death. Do I fear thy clanging ſhield? Does my ſoul tremble at Olla's ſong? No: Cairbar, frighten thou the feeble; Oſcar is like a rock.

AND wilt thou not yield the ſpear, replied the riſing pride of Cairbar? Are thy words mighty becauſe Fingal is near, the gray-haired warrior of Morven. He has fought with little men. But he muſt vaniſh before Cairbar, like a thin pillar of miſt before the winds of Atha †.

WERE he who fought with little men near the chief of Atha: Atha's chief would yield green

* Ti'-mór-ri', *the houſe of the great king*, the name of the royal palace of the ſupreme kings of Ireland.

† Atha, *ſhallow river:* the name of Cairbar's ſeat in Connaught.

Erin to avoid his rage. Speak not of the mighty, O Cairbar! but turn thy ſword on me. Our ſtrength is equal: but Fingal is renowned! the firſt of mortal men!

THEIR people ſaw the darkening chiefs. Their crowding ſteps are heard around. Their eyes roll in fire. A thouſand ſwords are half unſheathed. Red-haired Olla raiſed the ſong of battle: the trembling joy of Oſcar's ſoul aroſe: the wonted joy of his ſoul when Fingal's horn was heard.

DARK as the ſwelling wave of ocean before the riſing winds, when it bends its head near the coaſt, came on the hoſt of Cairbar.——Daughter of Toſcar *! why that tear? He is not fallen yet. Many were the deaths of his arm before my hero fell!---Behold they fall before my ſon like the groves in the deſart, when an angry ghoſt ruſhes through night, and takes their green heads in his hand! Morlath falls: Maronnan dies: Conachar trembles in his blood. Cairbar ſhrinks before Oſcar's ſword; and creeps in darkneſs behind his ſtone. He lifted the ſpear in ſecret, and pierced my Oſcar's ſide. He falls forward on his ſhield: his knee ſuſtains the

* The poet means Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar, to whom he addreſſed that part of the poem, which related to the death of Oſcar her lover.

chief:

chief: but his ſpear is in his hand. See gloomy Cairbar * falls. The ſteel pierced his forehead, and divided his red hair behind. He lay, like a ſhattered rock, which Cromla ſhakes from its ſide. But never more ſhall Oſcar riſe! he leans on his boſſy ſhield. His ſpear is in his terrible hand: Erin's ſons ſtood diſtant and dark. Their ſhouts aroſe, like the crowded noiſe of ſtreams, and Lena echoed around.

FINGAL heard the ſound; and took his father's ſpear. His ſteps are before us on the heath. He ſpoke the words of woe. I hear the noiſe of battle: and Oſcar is alone. Riſe, ye ſons of Morven, and join the hero's ſword.

OSSIAN ruſhed along the heath. Fillan bounded over Lena. Fergus flew with feet of wind. Fingal ſtrode in his ſtrength, and the light of his ſhield is terrible. The ſons of Erin ſaw it far diſtant; they trembled in their ſouls. They knew that the wrath of the king aroſe: and they foreſaw their death. We firſt arrived; we fought; and Erin's chiefs withſtood our rage.

* The Iriſh hiſtorians place the death of Cairbar, in the latter end of the third century: they ſay, he was killed in battle againſt Oſcar the ſon of Oſſian, but deny that he fell by his hand. As they have nothing to go upon but the traditions of their bards, the tranſlator thinks that the account of Oſſian is as probable: at the worſt, it is but oppoſing one tradition to another.

But when the king came, in the ſound of his courſe, what heart of ſteel could ſtand! Erin fled over Lena. Death purſued their flight.

We ſaw Oſcar leaning on his ſhield. We ſaw his blood around. Silence darkened on every hero's face. Each turned his back and wept. The king ſtrove to hide his tears. His gray beard whiſtled in the wind. He bends his head over his ſon: and his words are mixed with ſighs.

And art thou fallen, Oſcar, in the midſt of thy courſe? the heart of the aged beats over thee! He ſees thy coming battles. He beholds the battles which ought to come, but they are cut off from thy fame. When ſhall joy dwell at Selma? When ſhall the ſong of grief ceaſe on Morven? My ſons fall by degrees: Fingal ſhall be the laſt of his race. The fame which I have received ſhall paſs away: my age will be without friends. I ſhall ſit like a grey cloud in my hall: nor ſhall I expect the return of a ſon, in the midſt of his ſounding arms. Weep, ye heroes of Morven! never more ſhall Oſcar riſe!

And they did weep, O Fingal; dear was the hero to their ſouls. He went out to battle, and the foes vaniſhed; he returned, in peace, amidſt their joy. No father mourned his ſon ſlain in youth; no brother his brother of love. They

fell,

fell, without tears, for the chief of the people was low! Bran * is howling at his feet: gloomy Luäth is ſad, for he had often led them to the chace; to the bounding roes of the deſart.

WHEN Oſcar beheld his friends around, his white breaſt roſe with a ſigh.---The groans, he ſaid, of my aged heroes, the howling of my dogs, the ſudden burſts of the ſong of grief, have melted Oſcar's ſoul. My ſoul, that never melted before; it was like the ſteel of my ſword. ---Oſſian, carry me to my hills! Raiſe the ſtones of my fame. Place the horn of the deer, and my ſword within my narrow dwelling.---The torrent hereafter may waſh away the earth of my tomb: the hunter may find the ſteel and ſay, "This has been Oſcar's ſword."

AND falleſt thou, ſon of my fame! And ſhall I never ſee thee, Oſcar! When others hear of their ſons, I ſhall not hear of thee. The moſs is on the ſtones of his tomb, and the mournful wind is there. The battle ſhall be fought without him: he ſhall not purſue the dark-brown hinds. When the warrior returns from battles, and tells of other lands, he will ſay, I have ſeen

* Bran was one of Fingal's dogs.—He was ſo remarkable for his fleetneſs, that the poet, in a piece which is not juſt now in the tranſlator's hands, has given him the ſame properties with Virgil's Camilla.

a tomb,

a tomb, by the roaring ſtream, where a warrior darkly dwells: he was ſlain by car-borne Oſcar, the firſt of mortal men.---I, perhaps, ſhall hear him, and a beam of joy will riſe in my ſoul.

THE night would have deſcended in ſorrow, and morning returned in the ſhadow of grief: our chiefs would have ſtood like cold dropping rocks on Lena, and have forgot the war, had not the king diſperſed his grief, and raiſed his mighty voice. The chiefs, as new-wakened from dreams, lift their heads around.

How long ſhall we weep on Lena; or pour our tears in Ullin? The mighty will not return. Oſcar ſhall not riſe in his ſtrength. The valiant muſt fall one day, and be no more known on his hills.---Where are our fathers, O warriors! the chiefs of the times of old? They have ſet like ſtars that have ſhone, we only hear the ſound of their praiſe. But they were renowned in their day, and the terror of other times. Thus ſhall we paſs, O warriors, in the day of our fall. Then let us be renowned when we may; and leave our fame behind us, like the laſt beams of the ſun, when he hides his red head in the weſt.

ULLIN, my aged bard! take the ſhip of the king. Carry Oſcar to Selma, and let the daughters of Morven weep. We ſhall fight in Erin for

for the race of fallen Cormac. The days of my years begin to fail: I feel the weakneſs of my arm. My fathers bend from their clouds, to receive their gray-haired ſon. But, Trenmor! before I go hence, one beam of my fame ſhall riſe: ſo ſhall my days end, as my years begun, in fame: my life ſhall be one ſtream of light to other times.

ULLIN rais'd his white ſails: the wind of the ſouth came forth. He bounded on the waves towards Selma's walls.---I remained in my grief, but my words were not heard.——The feaſt is ſpread on Lena: an hundred heroes reared the tomb of Cairbar: but no ſong is raiſed over the chief; for his ſoul had been dark and bloody. We remembered the fall of Cormac! and what could we ſay in Cairbar's praiſe?

THE night came rolling down. The light of an hundred oaks aroſe. Fingal ſat beneath a tree. The chief of Etha ſat near the king, the gray-hair'd ſtrength of Uſnoth.

OLD Althan * ſtood in the midſt, and told the tale of fallen Cormac. Althan the ſon of Co-

* Althan, the ſon of Conachar, was the chief bard of Arth king of Ireland. After the death of Arth, Althan attended his ſon Cormac, and was preſent at his death.—He had made his eſcape from Cairbar, by the means of Cathmor, and coming to Fingal, related, as here, the death of his maſter Cormac.

nachar, the friend of car-borne Cuchullin: he dwelt with Cormac in windy Temora, when Semo's ſon fought with generous Torlath.--- The tale of Althan was mournful, and the tear was in his eye.

* THE ſetting ſun was yellow on Dora †. Gray evening began to deſcend. Temora's woods ſhook with the blaſt of the unconſtant wind. A cloud, at length, gathered in the weſt, and a red ſtar looked from behind its edge.---I ſtood in the wood alone, and ſaw a ghoſt on the darkening air. His ſtride extended from hill to hill: his ſhield was dim on his ſide. It was the ſon of Semo: I knew the ſadneſs of his face. But he paſſed away in his blaſt; and all was dark around.——My ſoul was ſad. I went to the hall of ſhells. A thouſand lights aroſe: the hundred bards had ſtrung the harp. Cormac ſtood in the midſt, like the morning ſtar ‡, when it rejoices on the eaſtern hill, and its

* Althan ſpeaks.

† Doira, *the woody ſide of a mountain*; it is here a hill in the neighbourhood of Temora.

‡ *Qualis, ubi oceani perfuſus Lucifer unda,*
Quem Venus ante alios aſtrorum diligit ignes,
Extulit os ſacrum cœlo, tenebraſque reſolvit.

VIRG.

So

its young beams are bathed in ſhowers.---The ſword of Artho * was in the hand of the king; and he looked with joy on its poliſhed ſtuds: thrice he attempted to draw it, and thrice he failed: his yellow locks are ſpread on his ſhoulders: his cheeks of youth are red.---I mourned over the beam of youth, for he was ſoon to ſet.

ALTHAN! he ſaid, with a ſmile, haſt thou beheld my father? Heavy is the ſword of the king, ſurely his arm was ſtrong. O that I were like him in battle, when the rage of his wrath aroſe! then would I have met, like Cuchullin, the car-borne ſon of Cantéla! But years may come on, O Althan! and my arm be ſtrong.---Haſt thou heard of Semo's ſon, the chief of high Temora? He might have returned with his fame; for he promiſed to return to-night. My bards wait him with their ſongs, and my feaſt is ſpread.---

I HEARD the king in ſilence. My tears began to flow. I hid them with my gray locks; but he perceived my grief.

So from the ſeas exerts his radiant head,
The ſtar, by whom the lights of heav'n are led:
Shakes from his roſy locks the pearly dews;
Diſpels the darkneſs, and the day renews.

DRYDEN.

* Arth, or Artho, the father of Cormac king of Ireland.

SON of Conachar! he ſaid, is the king of Tura low? Why burſts thy ſigh in ſecret? And why deſcends the tear?---Comes the car-borne Torlath? Or the ſound of the red-haired Cairbar?——They come!---for I ſee thy grief; and Tura's king is low!---Shall I not ruſh to battle?---But I cannot lift the arms of my fathers!---O had mine arm the ſtrength of Cuchullin, ſoon would Cairbar fly; the fame of my fathers would be renewed; and the actions of other times!

HE took his bow of yew. Tears flow from his ſparkling eyes.---Grief ſaddens around: the bards bend forward from their harps. The blaſt touches their ſtrings, and the ſound of woe aſcends.

A VOICE is heard at a diſtance, as of one in grief; it was Carril of other times, who came from the dark Slimora*.---He told of the death of Cuchullin, and of his mighty deeds. The people were ſcattered around his tomb: their arms lay on the ground. They had forgot the battle, for the ſound of his ſhield had ceaſed.

BUT who, ſaid the ſoft-voiced Carril, come like the bounding roes? their ſtature is like the

* Slimora, a hill in Connaught, near which Cuchullin was killed.

young

young trees of the plain, growing in a ſhower: ---Soft and ruddy are their cheeks: but fearleſs ſouls look forth from their eyes?——Who but the ſons of Uſnoth, the car-borne chiefs of Etha? The people riſe on every ſide, like the ſtrength of an half-extinguiſhed fire, when the winds come ſuddenly from the deſart, on their ruſtling wings.--- The ſound of Caithbat's ſhield was heard. The heroes ſaw Cuchullin *, in the form of lovely Nathos. So rolled his ſparkling eyes, and ſuch were his ſteps on his heath.—4—Battles are fought at Lego: the ſword of Nathos prevails. Soon ſhalt thou behold him in thy halls, king of woody Temora!——

AND ſoon may I behold him, O Carril! replied the returning joy of Cormac. But my ſoul is ſad for Cuchullin; his voice was pleaſant in mine ear.——Often have we moved on Dora, at the chace of the dark-brown hinds: his bow was unerring on the mountains. --- He ſpoke of mighty men. He told of the deeds of my fathers; and I felt the joy of my breaſt.——But ſit thou, at the feaſt, O Carril; I have often heard thy voice. Sing in thepraiſe of Cuchullin; and of that mighty ſtranger.

* That is, they ſaw a manifeſt likeneſs between the perſon of Nathos and Cuchullin.

DAY roſe on Temora, with all the beams of the eaſt. Trathin came to the hall, the ſon of old Gellama *.---I behold, he ſaid, a dark cloud in the deſart, king of Innis-fail! a cloud it ſeemed at firſt, but now a crowd of men. One ſtrides before them in his ſtrength; and his red hair flies in the wind. His ſhield glitters to the beam of the eaſt. His ſpear is in his hand.

CALL him to the feaſt of Temora, replied the king of Erin. My hall is the houſe of ſtrangers, ſon of the generous Gellama!---Perhaps it is the chief of Etha, coming in the ſound of his renown.---Hail, mighty ſtranger, art thou of the friends of Cormac?---But Carril, he is dark, and unlovely; and he draws his ſword. Is that the ſon of Uſnoth, bard of the times of old?

IT is not the ſon of Uſnoth, ſaid Carril, but the chief of Atha.——Why comeſt thou in thy arms to Temora, Cairbar of the gloomy brow? Let not thy ſword riſe againſt Cormac! Whither doſt thou turn thy ſpeed?

HE paſſed on in his darkneſs, and ſeized the hand of the king. Cormac foreſaw his death, and the rage of his eyes aroſe.---Retire, thou gloomy chief of Atha: Nathos comes with battle.——Thou art bold in Cormac's hall, for his

* Geal-lamha, *white-handed.*

arm

arm is weak.---The ſword entered Cormac's ſide: he fell in the halls of his fathers. His fair hair is in the duſt. His blood is ſmoaking round.

AND art thou fallen in thy halls, I ſaid *, O ſon of noble Artho? The ſhield of Cuchullin was not near. Nor the ſpear of thy father. Mournful are the mountains of Erin, for the chief of the people is low!——Bleſt be thy ſoul, O Cormac! thou art ſnatched from the midſt of thy courſe.

MY words came to the ears of Cairbar, and he cloſed us † in the midſt of darkneſs. He feared to ſtretch his ſword to the bards ‡: though his ſoul was dark. Three days we pined alone: on the fourth, the noble Cathmor came.---He heard our voice from the cave; he turned the eye of his wrath on Cairbar.

CHIEF of Atha! he ſaid, how long wilt thou pain my ſoul? Thy heart is like the rock of the deſart; and thy thoughts are dark.---But thou art the brother of Cathmor, and he will fight thy battles.——But Cathmor's ſoul is not like thine, thou feeble hand of war! The light of

* Althan ſpeaks.

† That is, himſelf and Carril, as it afterwards appears.

‡ The perſons of the bards were ſo ſacred, that even he, who had juſt murdered his ſovereign, feared to kill them.

my boſom is ſtained with thy deeds: the bards will not ſing of my renown. They may ſay, "Cathmor was brave, but he fought for "gloomy Cairbar." They will paſs over my tomb in ſilence, and my fame ſhall not be heard.---Cairbar! looſe the bards: they are the ſons of other times. Their voice ſhall be heard in other ages, when the kings of Temora have failed.

We came forth at the words of the chief. We ſaw him in his ſtrength. He was like thy youth, O Fingal, when thou firſt didſt lift the ſpear.---His face was like the ſunny field when it is bright: no darkneſs moved over his brow. But he came with his thouſands to Ullin; to aid the red-haired Cairbar: and now he comes to revenge his death, O king of woody Morven.——

And let him come, replied the king; I love a foe like Cathmor. His ſoul is great: his arm is ſtrong, and his battles are full of fame.—— But the little ſoul is like a vapour that hovers round the marſhy lake: it never riſes on the green hill, leſt the winds meet it there: its dwelling is in the cave, and it ſends forth the dart of death.

Usnoth! thou haſt heard the fame of Etha's car-borne chiefs.---Our young heroes, O warrior,

rior, are like the renown of our fathers.---They fight in youth, and they fall: their names are in the ſong.---But we are old, O Uſnoth, let us not fall like aged oaks; which the blaſt overturns in ſecret. The hunter came paſt, and ſaw them lying gray acroſs a ſtream. How have theſe fallen, he ſaid, and whiſtling paſſed along.

RAISE the ſong of joy, ye bards of Morven, that our ſouls may forget the paſt.---The red ſtars look on us from the clouds, and ſilently deſcend. Soon ſhall the gray beam of the morning riſe, and ſhew us the foes of Cormac.——Fillan! take the ſpear of the king; go to Mora's dark-brown ſide. Let thine eyes travel over the heath, like flames of fire. Obſerve the foes of Fingal, and the courſe of generous Cathmor. I hear a diſtant ſound, like the falling of rocks in the deſart.——But ſtrike thou thy ſhield, at times, that they may not come through night, and the fame of Morven ceaſe.---I begin to be alone, my ſon; and I dread the fall of my renown.

THE voice of the bards aroſe. The king leaned on the ſhield of Trenmor.---Sleep deſcended on his eyes, and his future battles roſe in his dreams. The hoſt are ſleeping around. Dark-haired Fillan obſerved the foe. His ſteps

are

are on a diſtant hill: we hear, at times, his clanging ſhield.

One of the Fragments of Ancient Poetry lately publiſhed, gives a different account of the death of Oſcar, the ſon of Oſſian. The tranſlator, though he well knew the more probable tradition concerning that hero, was unwilling to reject a poem, which, if not really of Oſſian's compoſition, has much of his manner, and conciſe turn of expreſſion. A more correct copy of that fragment, which has ſince come to the tranſlator's hands, has enabled him to correct the miſtake, into which a ſimilarity of names had led thoſe who handed down the poem by tradition. —The heroes of the piece are Oſcar the ſon of Caruth, and Dermid the ſon of Diaran. Oſſian, or perhaps his imitator, opens the poem with a lamentation for Oſcar, and afterwards, by an eaſy tranſition, relates the ſtory of Oſcar the ſon of Caruth, who ſeems to have bore the ſame character, as well as name, with Oſcar the ſon of Oſſian. Though the tranſlator thinks he has good reaſon to reject the fragment as the compoſition of Oſſian; yet as it is, after all, ſtill ſomewhat doubtful whether it is or not, he has here ſubjoined it.

WHY openeſt thou afreſh the ſpring of my grief, O ſon of Alpin, inquiring how Oſcar fell? My eyes are blind with tears; but memory beams on my heart. How can I relate the mournful death of the head of the people! Chief of the warriors, Oſcar, my ſon, ſhall I ſee thee no more!

He fell as the moon in a ſtorm; as the ſun from the midſt of his courſe, when clouds riſe from the waſte of the waves, when the blackneſs of the ſtorm inwraps the rocks of Ardannider. I, like an ancient oak on Morven, I moulder alone in my place. The blaſt hath lopped my branches away; and I tremble at the wings of the north. Chief of the warriors, Oſcar, my ſon! ſhall I ſee thee no more!

But, ſon of Alpin, the hero fell not harmleſs as the graſs of the field; the blood of the mighty was on his ſword, and he travelled with death through the ranks of their pride. But Oſcar, thou ſon of Caruth, thou haſt fallen low! No enemy fell by

by thy hand. Thy ſpear was ſtained with the blood of thy friend.

Dermid and Oſcar were one: They reaped the battle together. Their friendſhip was ſtrong as their ſteel; and death walked between them to the field. They came on the foe like two rocks falling from the brows of Ardven. Their ſwords were ſtained with the blood of the valiant: warriors fainted at their names. Who was equal to Oſcar, but Dermid? and who to Dermid, but Oſcar?

They killed mighty Dargo in the field; Dargo who never fled in war. His daughter was fair as the morn; mild as the beam of night. Her eyes, like two ſtars in a ſhower: her breath, the gale of ſpring: her breaſts, as the new-fallen ſnow floating on the moving heath. The warriors ſaw her, and loved; their ſouls were fixed on the maid. Each loved her as his fame; each muſt poſſeſs her or die. But her ſoul was fixed on Oſcar; the ſon of Caruth was the youth of her love. She forgot the blood of her father; and loved the hand that ſlew him.

Son of Caruth, ſaid Dermid, I love; O Oſcar, I love this maid. But her ſoul cleaveth unto thee; and nothing can heal Dermid. Here, pierce this boſom, Oſcar; relieve me, my friend, with thy ſword.

My ſword, ſon of Diaran, ſhall never be ſtained with the blood of Dermid.

Who then is worthy to ſlay me, O Oſcar ſon of Caruth? Let not my life paſs away unknown. Let none but Oſcar ſlay me. Send me with honour to the grave, and let my death be renowned.

Dermid, make uſe of thy ſword; ſon of Diaran, wield thy ſteel. Would that I fell with thee! that my death came from the hand of Dermid!

They fought by the brook of the mountain, by the ſtreams of Branno. Blood tinged the running water, and curdled round the moſſy ſtones. The ſtately Dermid fell; he fell, and ſmiled in death.

And falleſt thou, ſon of Diaran, falleſt thou by Oſcar's hand! Dermid who never yielded in war, thus do I ſee thee fall!——

He

He went, and returned to the maid of his love; he returned, but ſhe perceived his grief.

Why that gloom, ſon of Caruth? what ſhades thy mighty ſoul?

Though once renowned for the bow, O maid, I have loſt my fame. Fixed on a tree by the brook of the hill, is the ſhield of the valiant Gormur, whom I ſlew in battle. I have waſted the day in vain, nor could my arrow pierce it.

Let me try, ſon of Caruth, the ſkill of Dargo's daughter. My hands were taught the bow: my father delighted in my ſkill.

She went. He ſtood behind the ſhield. Her arrow flew, and pierced his breaſt.

Bleſſed be that hand of ſnow; and bleſſed that bow of yew! Who but the daughter of Dargo was worthy to ſlay the ſon of Caruth? Lay me in the earth, my fair one; lay me by the ſide of Dermid.

Oſcar! the maid replied, I have the ſoul of the mighty Dargo. Well pleaſed I can meet death. My ſorrow I can end.——She pierced her white boſom with the ſteel. She fell; ſhe trembled; and died.

By the brook of the hill their graves are laid; a birch's unequal ſhade covers their tomb. Often on their green earthen tombs the branchy ſons of the mountain feed, when mid-day is all in flames, and ſilence over all the hills.

CARRIC-THURA:

A POEM*.

HAST † thou left thy blue courſe in heaven, golden-haired ſon of the ſky! The weſt has opened its gates; the bed of thy

* Fingal, returning from an expedition which he had made into the Roman province, reſolved to viſit Cathulla king of Inis-tore, and brother to Comála, whoſe ſtory is related, at large, in the dramatic poem, publiſhed in this collection. Upon his coming in ſight of Carric-thura, the palace of Cathulla, he obſerved a flame on its top, which, in thoſe days, was a ſignal of diſtreſs. The wind drove him into a bay, at ſome diſtance from Carric-thura, and he was obliged to paſs the night on the ſhore. Next day he attacked the army of Frothal king of Sora who had beſieged Cathulla in his palace of Carric-thura, and took Frothal himſelf priſoner, after he had engaged him in a ſingle combat. The deliverance of Carric-thura is the ſubject of the poem, but ſeveral other epiſodes are interwoven with it. It appears from tradition, that this poem was addreſſed to a Culdee, or one of the firſt Chriſtian miſſionaries, and that the ſtory of the *Spirit of Loda*, ſuppoſed to be the ancient Odin of Scandinavia, was introduced by Oſſian in oppoſition to the Culdee's doctrine. Be this as it will, it lets us into Oſſian's notions of a ſuperior being; and ſhews that he was not addicted to the ſuperſtition which prevailed all the world over, before the introduction of Chriſtianity.

† The ſong of Ullin, with which the poem opens, is in a lyric meaſure. It was uſual with Fingal, when he returned from his expeditions, to ſend his bards ſinging before him. This ſpecies of triumph is called, by Oſſian, the *ſong of victory*.

repoſe

repoſe is there. The waves come to behold thy beauty: they lift their trembling heads: they ſee thee lovely in thy ſleep; but they ſhrink away with fear. Reſt, in thy ſhadowy cave, O ſun! and let thy return be in joy.——But let a thouſand lights ariſe to the ſound of the harps of Selma: let the beam ſpread in the hall, the king of ſhells is returned! The ſtrife of Crona * is paſt, like ſounds that are no more: raiſe the ſong, O bards, the king is returned with his fame!

SUCH was the ſong of Ullin, when Fingal returned from battle: when he returned in the fair bluſhing of youth; with all his heavy locks. His blue arms were on the hero; like a gray cloud on the ſun, when he moves in his robes of miſt, and ſhews but half his beams. His heroes follow the king: the feaſt of ſhells is ſpread. Fingal turns to his bards, and bids the ſong to riſe.

VOICES of echoing Cona! he ſaid, O bards of other times! Ye, on whoſe ſouls the blue hoſts of our fathers riſe! ſtrike the harp in my hall; and let Fingal hear the ſong. Pleaſant is the joy

* Oſſian has celebrated the *ſtrife of Crona*, in a particular poem. This poem is connected with it, but it was impoſſible for the tranſlator to procure that part which relates to Crona, with any degree of purity.

of grief! it is like the ſhower of ſpring, when it ſoftens the branch of the oak, and the young leaf lifts its green head. Sing on, O bards, to-morrow we lift the ſail. My blue courſe is through the ocean, to Carric-thura's walls; the moſſy walls of Sarno, where Comála dwelt. There the noble Cathulla ſpreads the feaſt of ſhells. The boars of his woods are many, and the ſound of the chace ſhall ariſe.

CRONNAN *, ſon of ſong! ſaid Ullin, Minona, graceful at the harp! raiſe the ſong of Shilric, to pleaſe the king of Morven. Let Vinvela come in her beauty, like the ſhowery bow, when its ſhews its lovely head on the lake, and the ſetting ſun is bright. And ſhe comes, O Fingal! her voice is ſoft but ſad.

VINVELA.

MY love is a ſon of the hill. He purſues the flying deer. His gray dogs are panting around him; his bow-ſtring ſounds in the wind. Doſt thou reſt by the fount of the rock, or by the noiſe of the mountain-ſtream? the ruſhes are

* One ſhould think that the parts of Shilric and Vinvela were repreſented by Cronnan and Minona, whoſe very names denote that they were ſingers, who performed in public. Crounan ſignifies *a mournful ſound*; Minona, or Mín-'ónn, *ſoft air*. All the dramatic poems of Oſſian appear to have been preſented before Fingal, upon ſolemn occaſions.

nodding

nodding with the wind, the mist is flying over the hill. I will approach my love unperceived, and see him from the rock. Lovely I saw thee first by the aged oak of Branno *; thou wert returning tall from the chace; the faireſt among thy friends.

SHILRIC.

WHAT voice is that I hear? that voice like the ſummer-wind.---I ſit not by the nodding ruſhes; I hear not the fount of the rock. Afar, Vinvela †, afar I go to the wars of Fingal. My dogs attend me no more. No more I tread the hill. No more from on high I ſee thee, fair-moving by the ſtream of the plain; bright as the bow of heaven; as the moon on the weſtern wave.

VINVELA.

THEN thou art gone, O Shilric! and I am alone on the hill. The deer are ſeen on the brow; void of fear they graze along. No more

* Bran, or Branno, ſignifies *a mountain-ſtream:* it is here ſome river known by that name, in the days of Oſſian. There are ſeveral ſmall rivers in the north of Scotland ſtill retaining the name of Bran; in particular one which falls into the Tay at Dunkeld.

† Bhín-bheul, *a woman with a melodious voice. Bh* in the Galic Language has the ſame ſound with the *v* in Engliſh.

they dread the wind; no more the ruſtling tree. The hunter is far removed; he is in the field of graves. Strangers! ſons of the waves! ſpare my lovely Shilric.

SHILRIC.

IF fall I muſt in the field, raiſe high my grave, Vinvela. Gray ſtones and heaped-up earth, ſhall mark me to future times. When the hunter ſhall ſit by the mound, and produce his food at noon, "Some warrior reſts here," he will ſay; and my fame ſhall live in his praiſe. Remember me, Vinvela, when low on earth I lie!

VINVELA.

YES!---I will remember thee---Indeed my Shilric will fall. What ſhall I do, my love! when thou art gone for ever? Through theſe hills I will go at noon: I will go through the ſilent heath. There I will ſee the place of thy reſt, returning from the chace. Indeed, my Shilric will fall; but I will remember him.

AND I remember the chief, ſaid the king of woody Morven; he conſumed the battle in his rage. But now my eyes behold him not. I met him, one day, on the hill; his cheek was pale; his brow was dark. The ſigh was frequent in his breaſt: his ſteps were towards the

deſart. But now he is not in the crowd of my chiefs, when the ſounds of my ſhields ariſe. Dwells he in the narrow houſe *, the chief of high Carmora? †

CRONNAN! ſaid Ullin of other times, raiſe the ſong of Shilric; when he returned to his hills, and Vinvela was no more. He leaned on her gray moſſy ſtone; he thought Vinvela lived. He ſaw her fair-moving ‡ on the plain: but the bright form laſted not: the ſun-beam fled from the field, and ſhe was ſeen no more. Hear the ſong of Shilric, it is ſoft but ſad.

I SIT by the moſſy fountain; on the top of the hill of winds. One tree is ruſtling above me. Dark waves roll over the heath. The lake is troubled below. The deer deſcend from the hill. No hunter at a diſtance is ſeen; no whiſtling cow-herd is nigh. It is mid-day: but all is ſilent. Sad are my thoughts alone. Didſt thou but appear, O my love, a wanderer on the heath! thy hair floating on the wind behind thee; thy boſom heaving on the ſight; thine

* The grave.

† Carn-mór, *high rocky hill.*

‡ The diſtinction, which the ancient Scots made between good and bad ſpirits, was, that the former appeared ſometimes in the day-time in lonely unfrequented places, but the latter ſeldom but by night, and always in a diſmal gloomy ſcene.

eyes

eyes full of tears for thy friends, whom the mist of the hill had concealed! Thee I would comfort, my love, and bring thee to thy father's house.

But is it she that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath? bright as the moon in autumn, as the sun in a summer-storm, comest thou, lovely maid, over rocks, over mountains to me?——She speaks: but how weak her voice! like the breeze in the reeds of the pool.

Returnest thou safe from the war? Where are thy friends, my love? I heard of thy death on the hill; I heard and mourned thee, Shilric!

Yes, my fair, I return; but I alone of my race. Thou shalt see them no more: their graves I raised on the plain. But why art thou on the desert hill? Why on the heath, alone?

Alone I am, O Shilric! alone in the winter-house. With grief for thee I expired. Shilric, I am pale in the tomb.

She fleets, she fails away; as gray mist before the wind!---and, wilt thou not stay, my love? Stay and behold my tears? fair thou appearest, Vinvela! fair thou wast, when alive!

By the mossy fountain I will sit; on the top of the hill of winds. When mid-day is silent around, converse, O my love, with me! come

on the wings of the gale! on the blaſt of the mountain, come! Let me hear thy voice, as thou paſſeſt, when mid-day is ſilent around.

SUCH was the ſong of Cronnan, on the night of Selma's joy. But morning roſe in the eaſt; the blue waters rolled in light. Fingal bade his ſails to riſe, and the winds come ruſtling from their hills. Inis-tore roſe to ſight, and Carric-thura's moſſy towers. But the ſign of diſtreſs was on their top: the green flame edged with ſmoke. The king of Morven ſtruck his breaſt: he aſſumed, at once, his ſpear. His darkened brow bends forward to the coaſt: he looks back to the lagging winds. His hair is diſordered on his back. The ſilence of the king is terrible.

NIGHT came down on the ſea; Rotha's bay received the ſhip. A rock bends along the coaſt with all its echoing wood. On the top is the circle * of Loda, and the moſſy ſtone of power. A narrow plain ſpreads beneath, covered with graſs and aged trees, which the midnight winds, in their wrath, had torn from the ſhaggy rock. The blue courſe of a ſtream is there: and the lonely blaſt of ocean purſues the thiſtle's beard.

* *The circle of Loda* is ſuppoſed to be a place of worſhip among the Scandinavians, as the ſpirit of Loda is thought to be the ſame with their god Odin.

THE

THE flame of three oaks arose: the feast is spread around: but the soul of the king is sad; for Carric-thura's battling chief. The wan, cold moon rose, in the east. Sleep descended on the youths: Their blue helmets glitter to the beam; the fading fire decays. But sleep did not rest on the king: he rose in the midst of his arms, and slowly ascended the hill to behold the flame of Sarno's tower.

THE flame was dim and distant; the moon hid her red face in the east. A blast came from the mountain, and bore, on its wings, the spirit of Loda. He came to his place in his terrors*, and he shook his dusky spear.---His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; and his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced with the spear of his strength, and raised his voice on high.

SON of night, retire: call thy winds and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence, with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, dismal spirit of Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds: feeble is that meteor, thy sword. The blast rolls them together; and thou thyself dost vanish. Fly from my presence son of night! call thy winds and fly!

* He is described, in a simile, in the poem concerning the death of Cuchullin.

Dost thou force me from my place, replied the hollow voice? The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the valiant. I look on the nations and they vaniſh: my noſtrils pour the blaſt of death. I come * abroad on the winds: the tempeſts are before my face. But my dwelling is calm, above the clouds, the fields of my reſt are pleaſant.

Dwell then in thy calm field, ſaid Fingal, and let Comhal's ſon be forgot. Do my ſteps aſcend, from my hills, into thy peaceful plains? Do I meet thee, with a ſpear, on thy cloud, ſpirit of diſmal Loda? Why then doſt thou frown on Fingal? or ſhake thine airy ſpear? But thou frowneſt in vain: I never fled from mighty men. And ſhall the ſons of the wind frighten the king of Morven? No: he knows the weakneſs of their arms.

Fly to thy land, replied the form: receive the wind and fly. The blaſts are in the hollow of my hand: the courſe of the ſtorm is mine. The king of Sora is my ſon, he bends at the ſtone of my power. His battle is around Carric-thura; and he will prevail. Fly to thy land, ſon of Comhal, or feel my flaming wrath.

* There is a great reſemblance between the terrors of this mock divinity, and thoſe of the true God, as they are deſcribed in the 18th Pſalm.

He

He lifted high his ſhadowy ſpear; and bent forward his terrible height. But the king, advancing, drew his ſword; the blade of dark-brown Luno *. The gleaming path of the ſteel winds through the gloomy ghoſt. The form fell ſhapeleſs into air, like a column of ſmoke, which the ſtaff of the boy diſturbs, as it riſes from the half-extinguiſhed furnace.

The ſpirit of Loda ſhrieked, as, rolled into himſelf, he roſe on the wind. Iniſtore ſhook at the ſound. The waves heard it on the deep: they ſtopped, in their courſe, with fear: the companions of Fingal ſtarted, at once; and took their heavy ſpears. They miſſed the king: they roſe with rage; all their arms reſound.

The moon came forth in the eaſt. The king returned in the gleam of his arms. The joy of his youths was great; their ſouls ſettled, as a ſea from a ſtorm. Ullin raiſed the ſong of gladneſs. The hills of Iniſtore rejoiced. The flame of the oak aroſe; and the tales of heroes are told.

But Frothal, Sora's battling king, ſits in ſadneſs beneath a tree. The hoſt ſpreads around Carric-thura. He looks towards the walls with

* The famous ſword of Fingal, made by Lun, or Luno, a ſmith of Lochlin.

rage. He longs for the blood of Cathulla, who, once, overcame the king in war.——When Annir reigned * in Sora, the father of car-borne Frothal, a blaſt roſe on the ſea, and carried Frothal to Iniſtore. Three days he feaſted in Sarno's halls, and ſaw the ſlow rolling eyes of Comála. He loved her, in the rage of youth, and ruſhed to ſeize the white-armed maid. Cathulla met the chief. The gloomy battle roſe. Frothal is bound in the hall: three days he pined alone. On the fourth, Sarno ſent him to his ſhip, and he returned to his land. But wrath darkened in his ſoul againſt the noble Cathulla. When Annir's ſtone † of fame aroſe, Frothal came in his ſtrength. The battle burned round Carric-thura, and Sarno's moſſy walls.

MORNING roſe on Iniſtore. Frothal ſtruck his dark-brown ſhield. His chiefs ſtarted at the ſound; they ſtood, but their eyes were turned to the ſea. They ſaw Fingal coming in his ſtrength; and firſt the noble Thubar ſpoke.

WHO comes like the ſtag of the mountain, with all his herd behind him? Frothal, it is a

* Annir was alſo the father of Erragon, who was killed after the death of his brother Frothal. The death of Erragon is the ſubject of *the battle of Lora*, a poem in this collection.

† That is, after the death of Annir. To erect the ſtone of one's fame, was, in other words, to ſay that the perſon was dead.

foe;

foe; I ſee his forward ſpear. Perhaps it is the king of Morven, Fingal the firſt of men. His actions are well known on Gormal; the blood of his foes is in Starno's halls. Shall I aſk the peace * of kings? He is like the thunder of heaven.

Son of the feeble hand, ſaid Frothal, ſhall my days begin in darkneſs? Shall I yield before I have conquered in battle, chief of ſtreamy Tora? The people would ſay in Sora, Frothal flew forth like a meteor; but the dark cloud met it, and it is no more. No: Thubar, I will never yield; my fame ſhall ſurround me like light. No: I will never yield, king of ſtreamy Tora.

He went forth with the ſtream of his people, but they met a rock: Fingal ſtood unmoved, broken they rolled back from his ſide. Nor did they roll in ſafety; the ſpear of the king purſued their flight. The field is covered with heroes. A riſing hill preſerved the flying hoſt.

Frothal ſaw their flight. The rage of his boſom roſe. He bent his eyes to the ground, and called the noble Thubar.——Thubar! my people fled. My fame has ceaſed to riſe. I will fight the king; I feel my burning ſoul.

* Honourable terms of peace.

Send

Send a bard to demand the combat. Speak not againſt Frothal's words.---But, Thubar! I love a maid; ſhe dwells by Thano's ſtream, the white-boſomed daughter of Herman, Utha with the ſoftly-rolling eyes. She feared the daughter * of Iniſtore, and her ſoft ſighs roſe, at my departure. Tell to Utha that I am low; but that my ſoul delighted in her.

SUCH were his words, reſolved to fight. But the ſoft ſigh of Utha was near. She had followed her hero over the ſea, in the armour of a man. She rolled her eye on the youth, in ſecret, from beneath a glittering helmet. But now ſhe ſaw the bard as he went, and the ſpear fell thrice from her hand. Her looſe hair flew on the wind. Her white breaſt roſe, with ſighs. She lifted up her eyes to the king; ſhe would ſpeak, but thrice ſhe failed.

FINGAL heard the words of the bard; he came in the ſtrength of ſteel. They mixed their deathful ſpears, and raiſed the gleam of their ſwords. But the ſteel of Fingal deſcended and cut Frothal's ſhield in twain. His fair ſide is expoſed; half bent he foreſees his death.

* By the daughter of Iniſtore, Frothal means Comála, of whoſe death Utha probably had not heard; conſequently ſhe feared that the former paſſion of Frothal for Comála might return.

DARKNESS gathered on Utha's ſoul. The tear rolled down her cheek. She ruſhed to cover the chief with her ſhield; but a fallen oak met her ſteps. She fell on her arm of ſnow; her ſhield, her helmet flew wide. Her white boſom heaved to the fight; her dark-brown hair is ſpread on earth.

FINGAL pitied the white-armed maid: he ſtayed the uplifted ſword. The tear was in the eye of the king, as, bending forward, he ſpoke. King of ſtreamy Sora! fear not the ſword of Fingal. It was never ſtained with the blood of the vanquiſhed; it never pierced a fallen foe. Let thy people rejoice along the blue waters of Tora: let the maids of thy love be glad. Why ſhouldeſt thou fall in thy youth, king of ſtreamy Sora?

FROTHAL heard the words of Fingal, and ſaw the riſing maid: they * ſtood in ſilence, in their beauty: like two young trees of the plain, when the ſhower of ſpring is on their leaves, and the loud winds are laid.

DAUGHTER of Herman, ſaid Frothal, didſt thou come from Tora's ſtreams; didſt thou come, in thy beauty, to behold thy warrior low? But he was low before the mighty, maid

* Frothal and Utha.

of

of the ſlow-rolling eye! The feeble did not overcome the ſon of car-borne Annir. Terrible art thou, O king of Morven! in battles of the ſpear. But, in peace, thou art like the ſun, when he looks through a ſilent ſhower: the flowers lift their fair heads before him; and the gales ſhake their ruſtling wings. O that thou wert in Sora! that my feaſt were ſpread!---The future kings of Sora would ſee thy arms and rejoice. They would rejoice at the fame of their fathers, who beheld the mighty Fingal.

Son of Annir, replied the king, the fame of Sora's race ſhall be heard.---When chiefs are ſtrong in battle, then does the ſong ariſe! But if their ſwords are ſtretched over the feeble: if the blood of the weak has ſtained their arms; the bard ſhall forget them in the ſong, and their tombs ſhall not be known. The ſtranger ſhall come and build there, and remove the heaped-up earth. An half-worn ſword ſhall riſe before him; and bending above it, he will ſay, "Theſe "are the arms of chiefs of old, but their names "are not in ſong."——Come thou, O Frothal, to the feaſt of Iniſtore; let the maid of thy love be there; and our faces will brighten with joy.

Fingal took his ſpear, moving in the ſteps of his might. The gates of Carric-thura are opened.

opened. The feaſt of ſhells is ſpread.---The voice of muſic aroſe. Gladneſs brightened in the hall.——The voice of Ullin was heard; the harp of Selma was ſtrung.---Utha rejoiced in his preſence, and demanded the ſong of grief; the big tear hung in her eye, when the ſoft * Crimora ſpoke. Crimora the daughter of Rinval, who dwelt at Lotha's † mighty ſtream. The tale was long, but lovely; and pleaſed the bluſhing maid of Tora.

Crimora ‡.

Who cometh from the hill, like a cloud tinged with the beam of the weſt? Whoſe voice is that, loud as the wind, but pleaſant as the harp of Carril? § It is my love in the light of ſteel; but ſad is his darkened brow. Live the

* There is a propriety in introducing this epiſode, as the ſituations of Crimora and Utha were ſo ſimilar.

† Lotha was the ancient name of one of the great rivers in the north of Scotland. The only one of them that ſtill retains a name of a like ſound is Lochy, in Inverneſsſhire; but whether it is the river mentioned here, the tranſlator will not pretend to ſay.

‡ Cri-móra, *a woman of a great ſoul.*

§ Perhaps the Carril mentioned here is the ſame with Carril the ſon of Kinfena, Cuchullin's bard. The name itſelf is proper to any bard, as it ſignifies *a ſprightly and harmonious ſound.*

mighty

mighty race of Fingal? or what diſturbs my Connal?*

CONNAL.

THEY live. I ſaw them return from the chace, like a ſtream of light. The ſun was on their ſhields. Like a ridge of fire they deſcended the hill. Loud is the voice of the youth; the war, my love, is near. To-morrow the terrible Dargo comes to try the force of our race. The race of Fingal he defies; the race of battle and wounds.

CRIMORA.

CONNAL, I ſaw his ſails like gray miſt on the ſable wave. They ſlowly came to land. Connal, many are the warriors of Dargo!

CONNAL.

BRING me thy father's ſhield; the boſſy, iron ſhield of Rinval; that ſhield like the full moon when it moves darkened through heaven.

* Connal, the ſon of Diaran, was one of the moſt famous heroes of Fingal; he was ſlain in a battle againſt Dargo a Briton; but whether by the hand of the enemy, or that of his miſtreſs, tradition does not determine.

CRIMORA.

CRIMORA.

THAT ſhield I bring, O Connal; but it did not defend my father. By the ſpear of Gormar he fell. Thou may'ſt fall, O Connal!

CONNAL.

FALL indeed I may: But raiſe my tomb, Crimora. Gray ſtones, a mound of earth, ſhall keep my memory. Bend thy red eye over my tomb, and beat thy mournful heaving breaſt. Though fair thou art, my love, as the light; more pleaſant than the gale of the hill; yet I will not ſtay. Raiſe my tomb, Crimora.

CRIMORA.

THEN give me thoſe arms of light; that ſword, and that ſpear of ſteel. I ſhall meet Dargo with thee, and aid my lovely Connal. Farewel, ye rocks of Ardven! ye deer! and ye ſtreams of the hill!---We ſhall return no more. Our tombs are diſtant far.

AND did they return no more? ſaid Utha's burſting ſigh. Fell the mighty in battle, and did Crimora live?---Her ſteps were lonely, and her ſoul was ſad for Connal. Was he not young and lovely; like the beam of the ſetting ſun? Ullin ſaw the virgin's tear, and took the ſoftly-

trembling

trembling harp: the ſong was lovely, but ſad, and ſilence was in Carric-thura.

AUTUMN is dark on the mountains; gray miſt reſts on the hills. The whirlwind is heard on the heath. Dark rolls the river through the narrow plain. A tree ſtands alone on the hill, and marks the ſlumbering Connal. The leaves whirl round with the wind, and ſtrew the grave of the dead. At times are ſeen here the ghoſts of the deceaſed, when the muſing hunter alone ſtalks ſlowly over the heath.

WHO can reach the ſource of thy race, O Connal? and who recount thy fathers? Thy family grew like an oak on the mountain, which meeteth the wind with its lofty head. But now it is torn from the earth. Who ſhall ſupply the place of Connal?

HERE was the din of arms; and here the groans of the dying. Bloody are the wars of Fingal! O Connal! it was here thou didſt fall. Thine arm was like a ſtorm; thy ſword a beam of the ſky; thy height, a rock on the plain; thine eyes, a furnace of fire. Louder than a ſtorm was thy voice, in the battles of thy ſteel. Warriors fell by thy ſword, as the thiſtle by the ſtaff of a boy.

DARGO the mighty came on, like a cloud of thunder. His brows were contracted and dark.

His

His eyes like two caves in a rock. Bright roſe their ſwords on each ſide; dire was the clang of their ſteel.

THE daughter of Rinval was near; Crimora bright in the armour of man; her yellow hair is looſe behind, her bow is in her hand. She followed the youth to the war, Connal her much-beloved. She drew the ſtring on Dargo; but erring pierced her Connal. He falls like an oak on the plain; like a rock from the ſhaggy hill. What ſhall ſhe do, hapleſs maid!---He bleeds; her Connal dies. All the night long ſhe cries, and all the day, O Connal, my love, and my friend! With grief the ſad mourner dies.

EARTH here incloſes the loveliеſt pair on the hill. The graſs grows between the ſtones of the tomb; I often ſit in the mournful ſhade. The wind ſighs through the graſs; their memory ruſhes on my mind. Undiſturbed you now ſleep together; in the tomb of the mountain you reſt alone.

AND ſoft be your reſt, ſaid Utha, children of ſtreamy Lotha. I will remember you with tears, and my ſecret ſong ſhall riſe; when the wind is in the groves of Tora, and the ſtream is roaring near. Then ſhall ye come on my ſoul, with all your lovely grief.

THREE days feaſted the kings: on the fourth their white ſails aroſe. The winds of the north carry the ſhip of Fingal to Morven's woody land. ——But the ſpirit of Loda ſat, in his cloud, behind the ſhips of Frothal. He hung forward with all his blaſts, and ſpread the white-boſomed ſails.——The wounds of his form were not forgot; he ſtill feared * the hand of the king.

* The ſtory of Fingal and the ſpirit of Loda, ſuppoſed to be the famous Odin, is the moſt extravagant fiction in all Oſſian's poems. It is not, however, without precedents in the beſt poets; and it muſt be ſaid for Oſſian, that he ſays nothing but what perfectly agreed with the notions of the times, concerning ghoſts. They thought the ſouls of the dead were material, and conſequently ſuſceptible of pain. Whether a proof could be drawn from this paſſage, that Oſſian had no notion of a divinity, I ſhall leave to others to determine: it appears, however, that he was of opinion, that ſuperior beings ought to take no notice of what paſſed among men.

THE

THE

SONGS of SELMA*.

STAR of the deſcending night! fair is thy light in the weſt! thou liſteſt thy unſhorn head from thy cloud: thy ſteps are ſtately on thy hill. What doſt thou behold in the plain? The ſtormy winds are laid. The murmur of the torrent comes from afar. Roaring waves climb the diſtant rock. The flies of evening are on

* This poem fixes the antiquity of a cuſtom, which is well known to have prevailed afterwards, in the north of Scotland, and in Ireland. The bards, at an annual feaſt, provided by the king or chief, repeated their poems, and ſuch of them as were thought, by him, worthy of being preſerved, were carefully taught to their children, in order to have them tranſmitted to poſterity.——It was one of thoſe occaſions that afforded the ſubject of the preſent poem to Oſſian.—It is called in the original, The Songs of Selma, which title it was thought proper to adopt in the tranſlation.

The poem is entirely lyric, and has great variety of verſification. The addreſs to the evening ſtar, with which it opens, has, in the original, all the harmony that numbers could give it; flowing down with all that tranquillity and ſoftneſs, which the ſcene deſcribed naturally inſpires.—Three of the ſongs which are introduced in this piece, were publiſhed among the fragments of ancient poetry, printed laſt year.

their feeble wings, and the hum of their courſe is on the field. What doſt thou behold, fair light? But thou doſt ſmile and depart. The waves come with joy around thee, and bathe thy lovely hair. Farewel, thou ſilent beam!---Let the light of Oſſian's ſoul ariſe.

AND it does ariſe in its ſtrength! I behold my departed friends. Their gathering is on Lora, as in the days that are paſt.——Fingal comes like a watry column of miſt; his heroes are around. And ſee the bards of the ſong, gray-haired Ullin; ſtately Ryno; Alpin *, with the tuneful voice, and the ſoft complaint of Minona!——How are ye changed, my friends, ſince the days of Selma's feaſt! when we contended, like the gales of the ſpring, that, flying over the hill, by turns bend the feebly-whiſtling graſs.

MINONA then came forth in her beauty; with down-caſt look and tearful eye; her hair flew ſlowly on the blaſt that ruſhed unfrequent

* Alpin is from the ſame root with Albion, or rather Albin, the ancient name of Britain; Alp, *high* in *land*, or *country*. The preſent name of our iſland has its origin in the Celtic tongue; ſo that thoſe who derived it from any other, betrayed their ignorance of the ancient language of our country.—— *Britain* comes from *Breac't in*, *variegated iſland*, ſo called from the face of the country, from the natives painting themſelves, or from their party-coloured cloaths.

from

from the hill.——The ſouls of the heroes were ſad when ſhe raiſed the tuneful voice; for often had they ſeen the grave of Salgar *, and the dark dwelling of white-boſomed Colma †. Colma left alone on the hill, with all her voice of muſic! Salgar promiſed to come: but the night deſcended round.---Hear the voice of Colma, when ſhe ſat alone on the hill!

COLMA.

IT is night;---I am alone, forlorn on the hill of ſtorms. The wind is heard in the mountain. The torrent ſhrieks down the rock. No hut receives me from the rain; forlorn on the hill of winds.

RISE, moon! from behind thy clouds; ſtars of the night appear! Lead me, ſome light, to the place where my love reſts from the toil of the chace! his bow near him, unſtrung; his dogs panting around him. But here I muſt ſit alone, by the rock of the moſſy ſtream. The ſtream and the wind roar; nor can I hear the voice of my love.

WHY delays my Salgar, why the ſon of the hill, his promiſe? Here is the rock, and the tree; and here the roaring ſtream. Thou didſt

* Sealg-'er, *a hunter.*

† Cul-math, *a woman with fine hair.*

promiſe with night to be here. Ah! whither is my Salgar gone? With thee I would fly, my father; with thee, my brother of pride. Our race have long been foes; but we are not foes, O Salgar!

CEASE a little while, O wind! ſtream, be thou ſilent a while! let my voice be heard over the heath; let my wanderer hear me. Salgar! it is I who call. Here is the tree, and the rock. Salgar, my love! I am here. Why delayeſt thou thy coming?

Lo! the moon appeareth. The flood is bright in the vale. The rocks are grey on the face of the hill. But I ſee him not on the brow; his dogs before him tell not that he is coming. Here I muſt ſit alone.

BUT who are theſe that lie beyond me on the heath? Are they my love and my brother?--Speak to me, O my friends! they anſwer not. My ſoul is tormented with fears.——Ah! they are dead. Their ſwords are red from the fight. O my brother! my brother! why haſt thou ſlain my Salgar? why, O Salgar! haſt thou ſlain my brother? Dear were ye both to me! what ſhall I ſay in your praiſe? Thou wert fair on the hill among thouſands; he was terrible in fight. Speak to me; hear my voice, ſons of my love!

But

But alas! they are ſilent; ſilent for ever! Cold are their breaſts of clay!

OH! from the rock of the hill; from the top of the windy mountain, ſpeak ye ghoſts of the dead! ſpeak, I will not be afraid.---Whither are ye gone to reſt? In what cave of the hill ſhall I find you? No feeble voice is on the wind: no anſwer half-drowned in the ſtorms of the hill.

I SIT in my grief. I wait for morning in my tears. Rear the tomb, ye friends of the dead; but cloſe it not till Colma come. My life flies away like a dream: why ſhould I ſtay behind? Here ſhall I reſt with my friends, by the ſtream of the ſounding rock. When night comes on the hill; when the wind is on the heath; my ghoſt ſhall ſtand in the wind, and mourn the death of my friends. The hunter ſhall hear from his booth. He ſhall fear but love my voice. For ſweet ſhall my voice be for my friends; for pleaſant were they both to me.

SUCH was thy ſong, Minona ſoftly-bluſhing maid of Torman. Our tears deſcended for Colma, and our ſouls were ſad.---Ullin came with the harp, and gave the ſong of Alpin.---The voice of Alpin was pleaſant: the ſoul of Ryno was a beam of fire. But they had reſted in the narrow houſe: and their voice was not

heard in Selma.——Ullin had returned one day from the chace, before the heroes fell. He heard their ſtrife on the hill; their ſong was ſoft but ſad. They mourned the fall of Morar, firſt of mortal men. His ſoul was like the ſoul of Fingal; his ſword like the ſword of Oſcar.---But he fell, and his father mourned: his ſiſter's eyes were full of tears.——Minona's eyes were full of tears, the ſiſter of car-borne Morar. She retired from the ſong of Ullin, like the moon in the weſt, when ſhe foreſees the ſhower, and hides her fair head in a cloud.---I touched the harp, with Ullin; the ſong of mourning roſe.

RYNO.

THE wind and the rain are over: calm is the noon of day. The clouds are divided in heaven. Over the green hills flies the inconſtant ſun. Red through the ſtony vale comes down the ſtream of the hill. Sweet are thy murmurs, O ſtream! but more ſweet is the voice I hear. It is the voice of Alpin, the ſon of ſong, mourning for the dead. Bent is his head of age, and red his tearful eye. Alpin, thou ſon of ſong, why alone on the ſilent hill? why complaineſt thou, as a blaſt in the wood; as a wave on the lonely ſhore?

ALPIN,

ALPIN.

MY tears, O Ryno! are for the dead; my voice, for the inhabitants of the grave. Tall thou art on the hill; fair among the ſons of the plain. But thou ſhalt fall like Morar *; and the mourner ſhall ſit on thy tomb. The hills ſhall know thee no more; thy bow ſhall lie in the hall, unſtrung.

THOU wert ſwift, O Morar! as a roe on the hill; terrible as a meteor of fire. Thy wrath was as the ſtorm. Thy ſword in battle, as lightning in the field. Thy voice was like a ſtream after rain; like thunder on diſtant hills. Many fell by thy arm; they were conſumed in the flames of thy wrath.

BUT when thou didſt return from war, how peaceful was thy brow! Thy face was like the ſun after rain; like the moon in the ſilence of night; calm as the breaſt of the lake when the loud wind is laid.

NARROW is thy dwelling now; dark the place of thine abode. With three ſteps I compaſs thy grave, O thou who waſt ſo great before! Four ſtones, with their heads of moſs, are the only memorial of thee. A tree with ſcarce a leaf,

* Mór-ér, *great man.*

long graſs which whiſtles in the wind, mark to the hunter's eye the grave of the mighty Morar. Morar! thou art low indeed. Thou haſt no mother to mourn thee; no maid with her tears of love. Dead is ſhe that brought thee forth. Fallen is the daughter of Morglan.

WHO on his ſtaff is this? who is this, whoſe head is white with age, whoſe eyes are red with tears, who quakes at every ſtep.---It is thy father*, O Morar! the father of no ſon but thee. He heard of thy fame in battle; he heard of foes diſperſed. He heard of Morar's fame; why did he not hear of his wound? Weep, thou father of Morar! weep; but thy ſon heareth thee not. Deep is the ſleep of the dead; low their pillow of duſt. No more ſhall he hear thy voice; no more ſhall he awake at thy call. When ſhall it be morn in the grave, to bid the ſlumberer awake?

FAREWEL, thou braveſt of men! thou conqueror in the field! but the field ſhall ſee thee no more; nor the dark wood be lightened with the ſplendor of thy ſteel. Thou haſt left no ſon. But the ſong ſhall preſerve thy name. Future times ſhall hear of thee; they ſhall hear of the fallen Morar.

* Torman, the ſon of Carthul, lord of I-mora, one of the weſtern iſles.

THE grief of all aroſe, but moſt the burſting ſigh of Armin *. He remembers the death of his ſon, who fell in the days of his youth. Carmor † was near the hero, the chief of the echoing Galmal. Why burſts the ſigh of Armin, he ſaid? Is there a cauſe to mourn? The ſong comes, with its muſic, to melt and pleaſe the ſoul. It is like ſoft miſt, that, riſing from a lake, pours on the ſilent vale; the green flowers are filled with dew, but the ſun returns in his ſtrength, and the miſt is gone. Why art thou ſad, O Armin, chief of ſea-ſurrounded Gorma?

SAD! I am indeed: nor ſmall my cauſe of woe!---Carmor, thou haſt loſt no ſon; thou haſt loſt no daughter of beauty. Colgar the valiant lives; and Annira faireſt maid. The boughs of thy family flouriſh, O Carmor! but Armin is the laſt of his race. Dark is thy bed, O Daura! and deep thy ſleep in the tomb.---When ſhalt thou awake with thy ſongs? with all thy voice of muſic?

RISE, winds of autumn, riſe; blow upon the dark heath! ſtreams of the mountains, roar! howl, ye tempeſts, in the top of the oak! walk through broken clouds, O moon! ſhow by in-

* Armin, *a hero.* He was chief or petty king of Gorma, i. e. *the blue iſland,* ſuppoſed to be one of the Hebrides.

† Cear-mór, *a tall dark-complexioned man.*

tervals

tervals thy pale face! bring to my mind that ſad night, when all my children fell; when Arindal the mighty fell; when Daura the lovely failed.

DAURA, my daughter! thou wert fair; fair as the moon on the hills of Fura*; white as the driven ſnow; ſweet as the breathing gale. Arindal, thy bow was ſtrong, thy ſpear was ſwift in the field: thy look was like miſt on the wave; thy ſhield, a red cloud in a ſtorm. Armar, renowned in war, came, and ſought Daura's love; he was not long denied; fair was the hope of their friends.

ERATH, ſon of Odgal, repined; for his brother was ſlain by Armar. He came diſguiſed like a ſon of the ſea: fair was his ſkiff on the wave; white his locks of age; calm his ſerious brow. Faireſt of women, he ſaid, lovely daughter of Armin! a rock not diſtant in the ſea, bears a tree on its ſide; red ſhines the fruit afar. There Armar waits for Daura. I came to carry his love along the rolling ſea.

SHE went; and ſhe called on Armar. Nought anſwered, but the ſon † of the rock. Armar,

* Fuar-a, *cold iſland.*

† By *the ſon of the rock* the poet means the echoing back of the human voice from a rock. The vulgar were of opinion, that this repetition of ſound was made by a ſpirit within the rock; and they, on that account, called it *mac-talla*; *the ſon who dwells in the rock.*

my

my love! my love! why tormenteſt thou me with fear? hear, ſon of Ardnart, hear: it is Daura who calleth thee! Erath the traitor fled laughing to the land. She lifted up her voice, and cried for her brother and her father. Arindal! Armin! none to relieve your Daura.

HER voice came over the ſea. Arindal my ſon deſcended from the hill; rough in the ſpoils of the chace. His arrows rattled by his ſide; his bow was in his hand: five dark gray dogs attended his ſteps. He ſaw fierce Erath on the ſhore: he ſeized and bound him to an oak. Thick bend the thongs * of the hide around his limbs; he loads the wind with his groans.

ARINDAL aſcends the wave in his boat, to bring Daura to land. Armar came in his wrath, and let fly the gray-feathered ſhaft. It ſung; it ſunk in thy heart, O Arindal my ſon! for Erath the traitor thou diedſt. The oar is ſtopped at once; he panted on the rock and expired. What is thy grief, O Daura, when round thy feet is poured thy brother's blood.

THE boat is broken in twain by the waves. Armar plunges into the ſea, to reſcue his Daura, or die. Sudden a blaſt from the hill comes over the waves. He ſunk, and he roſe no more.

* The poet here only means that Erath was bound with leathern thongs.

ALONE,

ALONE, on the ſea-beat rock, my daughter was heard to complain. Frequent and loud were her cries; nor could her father relieve her. All night I ſtood on the ſhore. I ſaw her by the faint beam of the moon. All night I heard her cries. Loud was the wind; and the rain beat hard on the ſide of the mountain. Before morning appeared, her voice was weak. It died away, like the evening-breeze among the graſs of the rocks. Spent with grief ſhe expired. And left thee Armin alone: gone is my ſtrength in the war, and fallen my pride among women.

WHEN the ſtorms of the mountain come; when the north lifts the waves on high; I ſit by the ſounding ſhore, and look on the fatal rock. Often by the ſetting moon I ſee the ghoſts of my children. Half-viewleſs, they walk in mournful conference together. Will none of you ſpeak in pity? They do not regard their father. I am ſad, O Carmor, nor ſmall my cauſe of woe!

SUCH were the words of the bards in the days of ſong; when the king heard the muſic of harps, and the tales of other times. The chiefs gathered from all their hills, and heard the lovely ſound. They praiſed the voice * of Cona! the firſt among a thouſand bards. But age is now

* Oſſian is ſometimes poetically called *the voice of Cona.*

on

on my tongue; and my ſoul has failed. I hear, ſometimes, the ghoſts of bards, and learn their pleaſant ſong. But memory fails in my mind; I hear the call of years. They ſay, as they paſs along, why does Oſſian ſing? Soon ſhall he lie in the narrow houſe, and no bard ſhall raiſe his fame.

ROLL on, ye dark-brown years, for ye bring no joy on your courſe. Let the tomb open to Oſſian, for his ſtrength has failed. The ſons of ſong are gone to reſt: my voice remains, like a blaſt, that roars, lonely, on a ſea-ſurrounded rock, after the winds are laid. The dark moſs whiſtles there, and the diſtant mariner ſees the waving trees.

CALTHON

CALTHON and COLMAL:

A POEM*.

PLEASANT is the voice of thy ſong, thou lonely dweller of the rock. It comes on the ſound of the ſtream, along the narrow

* This piece, as many more of Oſſian's compoſitions, is addreſſed to one of the firſt Chriſtian miſſionaries.—The ſtory of the poem is handed down, by tradition, thus—In the country of the Britons between the walls, two chiefs lived in the days of Fingal, Dunthalmo, lord of Teutha, ſuppoſed to be the Tweed; and Rathmor, who dwelt at Clutha, well known to be the river Clyde.—— Rathmor was not more renowned for his generoſity and hoſpitality, than Dunthalmo was infamous for his cruelty and ambition.—Dunthalmo, through envy, or on account of ſome private feuds, which ſubſiſted between the families, murdered Rathmor at a feaſt; but being afterwards touched with remorſe, he educated the two ſons of Rathmor, Calthon and Colmar, in his own houſe.—They growing up to man's eſtate, dropped ſome hints that they intended to revenge the death of their father, upon which Dunthalmo ſhut them up in two caves on the banks of Teutha, intending to take them off privately.—Colmal, the daughter of Dunthalmo, who was ſecretly in love with Calthon, helped him to make his eſcape from priſon, and fled with him to Fingal, diſguiſed in the habit of a young warrior, and implored his aid againſt Dunthalmo.——Fingal ſent Oſſian with three hundred men, to Colmar's relief.—Dunthalmo having previouſly murdered Colmar, came to a battle with Oſſian; but he was killed by that hero, and his army totally defeated.

Calthon married Colmal, his deliverer; and Oſſian returned to Morven.

vale.

vale. My ſoul awakes, O ſtranger! in the midſt of my hall. I ſtretch my hand to the ſpear, as in the days of other years.---I ſtretch my hand, but it is feeble; and the ſigh of my boſom grows.---Wilt thou not liſten, ſon of the rock, to the ſong of Oſſian? My ſoul is full of other times; the joy of my youth returns. Thus the ſun * appears in the weſt, after the ſteps of his brightneſs have moved behind a ſtorm; the green hills lift their dewy heads: the blue ſtreams rejoice in the vale. The aged hero comes forth on his ſtaff, and his grey hair glitters in the beam.

Dost thou not behold, ſon of the rock, a ſhield in Oſſian's hall? It is marked with the ſtrokes of battle; and the brightneſs of its boſſes has failed. That ſhield the great Dunthalmo bore, the chief of ſtreamy Teutha.——Dun-

* If chance the radiant ſun with farewel ſweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Atteſt their joy, that hill and valley rings.

MILTON.

—The fair ſun ſhine in ſummer's day;
—When a dreadful ſtorm away is flit
Through the broad world doth ſpread his goodly ray;
At ſight whereof each bird that ſits on ſpray,
And every beaſt that to his den was fled,
Come forth afreſh out of their late diſmay,
And to the light lift up their drooping head.

SPENCER.

thalmo bore it in battle, before he fell by Oſſian's ſpear. Liſten, ſon of the rock, to the tale of other years.---

RATHMOR was a chief of Clutha. The feeble dwelt in his hall. The gates of Rathmor were never cloſed; his feaſt was always ſpread. The ſons of the ſtranger came, and bleſſed the generous chief of Clutha. Bards raiſed the ſong, and touched the harp: and joy brightened on the face of the mournful.---Dunthalmo came, in his pride, and ruſhed into the combat of Rathmor. The chief of Clutha overcame: the rage of Dunthalmo roſe.---He came, by night, with his warriors; and the mighty Rathmor fell. He fell in his halls, where his feaſt was often ſpread for ſtrangers.——

COLMAR and Calthon were young, the ſons of car-borne Rathmor. They came, in the joy of youth, into their father's hall. They behold him in his blood, and their burſting tears deſcend.---The ſoul of Dunthalmo melted, when he ſaw the children of youth; he brought them to Alteutha's * walls; they grew in the houſe of

* Al-teutha, or rather Balteutha, *the town of Tweed*, the name of Dunthalmo's ſeat. It is obſervable that all the names in this poem, are derived from the Galic language; which, as I have remarked in a preceding note, is a proof that it was once the univerſal language of the whole iſland.

their

their foe.---They bent the bow in his preſence; and came forth to his battles.

THEY ſaw the fallen walls of their fathers; they ſaw the green thorn in the hall. Their tears deſcended in ſecret; and, at times, their faces were mournful. Dunthalmo beheld their grief: his darkening ſoul deſigned their death. He cloſed them in two caves, on the echoing banks of Teutha. The ſun did not come there with his beams; nor the moon of heaven by night. The ſons of Rathmor remained in darkneſs, and foreſaw their death.

THE daughter of Dunthalmo wept in ſilence, the fair-haired, blue-eyed Colmal *. Her eye had rolled in ſecret on Calthon; his lovelineſs ſwelled in her ſoul. She trembled for her warrior; but what could Colmal do? Her arm could not lift the ſpear; nor was the ſword formed for her ſide. Her white breaſt never roſe beneath a mail. Neither was her eye the terror of heroes. What canſt thou do, O Colmal! for the falling chief?---Her ſteps are unequal; her hair is looſe: her eye looks wildly through her

* Caol-mhal, *a woman with ſmall eye-brows*; ſmall eye-brows were a diſtinguiſhing part of beauty in Oſſian's time: and he ſeldom fails to give them to the fine women of his poems.

tears.---She came, by night, to the hall *; and armed her lovely form in ſteel; the ſteel of a young warrior, who fell in the firſt of his battles.---She came to the cave of Calthon, and looſed the thong from his hands.

ARISE, ſon of Rathmor, ſhe ſaid, ariſe, the night is dark. Let us fly to the king of Selma †, chief of fallen Clutha! I am the ſon of Lamgal, who dwelt in thy father's hall. I heard of thy dark dwelling in the cave, and my ſoul aroſe. Ariſe, ſon of Rathmor, for the night is dark.——

BLEST voice! replied the chief, comeſt thou from the darkly-rolling clouds? for often the ghoſts of his fathers deſcend to Calthon's dreams, ſince the ſun has retired from his eyes, and darkneſs has dwelt around him. Or art thou the ſon of Lamgal, the chief I often ſaw in Clutha? But ſhall I fly to Fingal, and Colmar my brother low? Shall I fly to Morven, and the hero cloſed in night? No: give me that ſpear, ſon of Lamgal, Calthon will defend his brother.

* That is, the hall where the arms taken from enemies were hung up as trophies. Oſſian is very careful to make his ſtories probable; for he makes Colmal put on the arms of a youth killed in his firſt battle, as more proper for a young woman, who cannot be ſuppoſed ſtrong enough to carry the armour of a full-grown warrior.

† Fingal.

A THOU-

A THOUSAND warriors, replied the maid, ſtretch their ſpears round car-borne Colmar. What can Calthon do againſt a hoſt ſo great? Let us fly to the king of Morven, he will come with battle. His arm is ſtretched forth to the unhappy; the lightning of his ſword is round the weak.---Ariſe, thou ſon of Rathmor; the ſhades of night will fly away. Dunthalmo will behold thy ſteps on the field, and thou muſt fall in thy youth.

THE ſighing hero roſe; his tears deſcend for car-borne Colmar. He came with the maid to Selma's hall; but he knew not that it was Colmal. The helmet cover'd her lovely face; and her breaſt roſe beneath the ſteel. Fingal returned from the chace, and found the lovely ſtrangers. They were like two beams of light, in the midſt of the hall.

THE king heard the tale of grief; and turned his eyes around. A thouſand heroes half-roſe before him; claiming the war of Teutha.---I came with my ſpear from the hill, and the joy of battle roſe in my breaſt: for the king ſpoke to Oſſian in the midſt of the people.

SON of my ſtrength, he ſaid, take the ſpear of Fingal; go to Teutha's mighty ſtream, and ſave the car-borne Colmar.---Let thy fame return before thee like a pleaſant gale; that my

ſoul may rejoice over my ſon, who renews the renown of our fathers.---Oſſian! be thou a ſtorm in battle; but mild when the foes are low!---It was thus my fame aroſe, O my ſon; and be thou like Selma's chief.---When the haughty come to my halls, my eyes behold them not. But my arm is ſtretched forth to the unhappy. My ſword defends the weak.

I REJOICED in the words of the king: and took my rattling arms.---Diaran * roſe at my ſide, and Dargo † king of ſpears.---Three hundred

* Diaran, father of that Connal who was unfortunately killed by Crimora, his miſtreſs.

† Dargo, the ſon of Collath, is celebrated in other poems by Oſſian. He is ſaid to have been killed by a boar at a hunting party. The lamentation of his miſtreſs, or wife, Mingala, over his body, is extant; but whether it is of Oſſian's compoſition, I cannot determine. It is generally aſcribed to him, and has much of his manner; but ſome traditions mention it as an imitation by ſome later bard.——As it has ſome poetical merit, I have ſubjoined it.

THE ſpouſe of Dargo came in tears: for Dargo was no more! The heroes ſigh over Lartho's chief: and what ſhall ſad Mingala do? The dark ſoul vaniſhed like morning miſt, before the king of ſpears: but the generous glowed in his preſence like the morning ſtar.

Who was the faireſt and moſt lovely? Who but Collath's ſtately ſon? Who ſat in the midſt of the wiſe, but Dargo of the mighty deeds?

Thy hand touched the trembling harp: Thy voice was ſoft as ſummer-winds.—Ah me! what ſhall the heroes ſay? for Dargo fell before a boar. Pale is the lovely-cheek; the look of which

was

dred youths followed our ſteps: the lovely ſtrangers were at my ſide. Dunthalmo heard the ſound of our approach; he gathered the ſtrength of Teutha.---He ſtood on a hill with his hoſt; they were like rocks broken with thunder, when their bent trees are ſinged and bare, and the ſtreams of their chinks have failed.

THE ſtream of Teutha rolled, in its pride, before the gloomy foe. I ſent a bard to Dunthalmo, to offer the combat on the plain; but he ſmiled in the darkneſs of his pride.---His unſettled hoſt moved on the hill; like the mountain-cloud, when the blaſt has entered its womb, and ſcatters the curling gloom on every ſide.

THEY brought Colmar to Teutha's bank, bound with a thouſand thongs. The chief is

was firm in danger!—Why haſt thou failed on our hills, thou fairer than the beams of the ſun?

The daughter of Adonſion was lovely in the eyes of the valiant; ſhe was lovely in their eyes, but ſhe choſe to be the ſpouſe of Dargo.

But thou art alone, Mingala! the night is coming with its clouds; where is the bed of thy repoſe? Where but in the tomb of Dargo?

Why doſt thou liſt the ſtone, O bard! why doſt thou ſhut the narrow houſe? Mingala's eyes are heavy, bard! She muſt ſleep with Dargo.

Laſt night I heard the ſong of joy in Lartho's lofty hall. But ſilence now dwells around my bed. Mingala reſts with Dargo.

ſad, but lovely, and his eye is on his friends; for we ſtood, in our arms, on the oppoſite bank of Teutha. Dunthalmo came with his ſpear, and pierced the hero's ſide: he rolled on the bank in his blood, and we heard his broken ſighs.

CALTHON ruſhed into the ſtream: I bounded forward on my ſpear. Teutha's race fell before us. Night came rolling down. Dunthalmo reſted on a rock, amidſt an aged wood. The rage of his boſom burned againſt the car-borne Calthon.---But Calthon ſtood in his grief; he mourned the fallen Colmar; Colmar ſlain in youth, before his fame aroſe.

I BADE the ſong of woe to riſe, to ſooth the mournful chief; but he ſtood beneath a tree, and often threw his ſpear on earth.---The humid eye of Colmal rolled near in a ſecret tear: ſhe foreſaw the fall of Dunthalmo, or of Clutha's battling chief.

Now half the night had paſſed away. Silence and darkneſs were on the field; ſleep reſted on the eyes of the heroes: Calthon's ſettling ſoul was ſtill. His eyes were half-cloſed; but the murmur of Teutha had not yet failed in his ear. ——Pale, and ſhewing his wounds, the ghoſt of Colmar came: he bended his head over the hero, and raiſed his feeble voice.

SLEEPS

SLEEPS the ſon of Rathmor in his might, and his brother low? Did we not riſe to the chace together, and purſue the dark-brown hinds? Colmar was not forgot till he fell; till death had blaſted his youth. I lie pale beneath the rock of Lona. O let Calthon riſe! the morning comes with its beams; and Dunthalmo will diſhonour the fallen.

HE paſſed away in his blaſt. The riſing Calthon ſaw the ſteps of his departure.---He ruſhed in the ſound of his ſteel; and unhappy Colmal roſe. She followed her hero through night, and dragged her ſpear behind.---But when Calthon came to Lona's rock, he found his fallen brother---The rage of his boſom roſe, and he ruſhed among the foe. The groans of death aſcend. They cloſe around the chief.---He is bound in the midſt, and brought to gloomy Dunthalmo.---The ſhout of joy aroſe; and the hills of night replied.---

I STARTED at the ſound: and took my father's ſpear. Diaran roſe at my ſide; and the youthful ſtrength of Dargo. We miſſed the chief of Clutha; and our ſouls were ſad.---I dreaded the departure of my fame; the pride of my valour roſe.

SONS of Morven, I ſaid, it is not thus our fathers fought. They reſted not on the field of ſtrangers,

ſtrangers, when the foe did not fall before them. ——Their ſtrength was like the eagles of heaven; their renown is in the ſong. But our people fall by degrees, and our fame begins to depart.——What ſhall the king of Morven ſay, if Oſſian conquers not at Teutha? Riſe in your ſteel, ye warriors, and follow the ſound of Oſſian's courſe. He will not return, but renowned, to the echoing walls of Selma.

MORNING roſe on the blue waters of Teutha; Colmal ſtood before me in tears. She told of the chief of Clutha: and thrice the ſpear fell from her hand. My wrath turned againſt the ſtranger; for my ſoul trembled for Calthon.

SON of the feeble hand, I ſaid, do Teutha's warriors fight with tears? The battle is not won with grief; nor dwells the ſigh in the ſoul of war.——Go to the deer of Carmun, or the lowing herds of Teutha.---But leave theſe arms, thou ſon of fear; a warrior may lift them in battle.——

I TORE the mail from her ſhoulders. Her ſnowy breaſt appeared. She bent her red face to the ground.---I looked in ſilence to the chiefs. The ſpear fell from my hand; and the ſigh of my boſom roſe.——But when I heard the name of the maid, my crowding tears deſcended.

I bleſſed

I bleſſed the lovely beam of youth, and bade the battle move.

WHY, ſon of the rock, ſhould Oſſian tell how Teutha's warriors died? They are now forgot in their land; and their tombs are not found on the heath.---Years came on with their tempeſts; and the green mounds mouldered away.---Scarce is the grave of Dunthalmo ſeen, or the place where he fell by the ſpear of Oſſian.---Some gray warrior, half blind with age, ſitting by night at the flaming oak of the hall, tells now my actions to his ſons, and the fall of the dark Dunthalmo. The faces of youth bend ſidelong towards his voice; ſurprize and joy burn in their eyes.---

I FOUND the ſon * of Rathmor bound to an oak; my ſword cut the thongs from his hands. And I gave him the white-boſomed Colmal.---They dwelt in the halls of Teutha; and Oſſian returned to Selma.

* Calthon.

LATHMON:

LATHMON:

A POEM*.

SELMA, thy halls are ſilent. There is no ſound in the woods of Morven. The wave tumbles alone on the coaſt. The ſilent beam of the ſun is on the field. The daughters of Morven come forth, like the bow of the ſhower; they look towards green Ullin for the white ſails of the king. He had promiſed to return, but the winds of the north aroſe.

WHO pours from the eaſtern hill, like a ſtream of darkneſs? It is the hoſt of Lathmon. He

* Lathmon a Britiſh prince, taking advantage of Fingal's abſence in Ireland, made a deſcent on Morven, and advanced within ſight of Selma the royal palace. Fingal arrived in the mean time, and Lathmor retreated to a hill, where his army was ſurpriſed by night, and himſelf taken priſoner by Oſſian and Gaul the ſon of Morni. This exploit of Gaul and Oſſian bears a near reſemblance to the beautiful epiſode of Niſus and Euryalus in Virgil's ninth Æneid. The poem opens, with the firſt appearance of Fingal on the coaſt of Morven, and ends, it may be ſuppoſed, about noon the next day. The firſt paragraph is in a lyric meaſure, and appears to have been ſung, of old, to the harp, as a prelude to the narrative part of the poem, which is in heroic verſe.

has

has heard of the abſence of Fingal. He truſts in the wind of the north. His ſoul brightens with joy. Why doſt thou come, Lathmon? The mighty are not in Selma. Why comeſt thou with thy forward ſpear? Will the daughters of Morven fight? But ſtop, O mighty ſtream, in thy courſe! Does not Lathmon behold theſe ſails? Why doſt thou vaniſh, Lathmon, like the miſt of the lake? But the ſqually ſtorm is behind thee; Fingal purſues thy ſteps!

THE king of Morven ſtarted from ſleep, as we rolled on the dark-blue wave. He ſtretched his hand to his ſpear, and his heroes roſe around. We knew that he had ſeen his fathers, for they often deſcended to his dreams, when the ſword of the foe roſe over the land; and the battle darkened before us.

WHITHER haſt thou fled, O wind, ſaid the king of Morven? Doſt thou ruſtle in the chambers of the ſouth, and purſue the ſhower in other lands? Why doſt thou not come to my ſails? to the blue face of my ſeas? The foe is in the land of Morven, and the king is abſent. But let each bind on his mail, and each aſſume his ſhield. Stretch every ſpear over the wave; let every ſword be unſheathed. Lathmon * is

* It is ſaid, by tradition, that it was the intelligence of Lathmon's invaſion, that occaſioned Fingal's return from Ireland; though Oſſian, more poetically, aſcribes the cauſe of Fingal's knowledge to his dream.

before

before us with his hoſt: he that fled * from Fingal on the plains of Lona. But he returns, like a collected ſtream, and his roar is between our hills.

SUCH were the words of Fingal. We ruſhed into Carmona's bay. Oſſian aſcended the hill; and thrice ſtruck his boſſy ſhield. The rock of Morven replied; and the bounding roes came forth. The foes were troubled in my preſence: and collected their darkened hoſt; for I ſtood, like a cloud on the hill, rejoicing in the arms of my youth.

MORNI † ſat beneath a tree, at the roaring waters of Strumon ‡: his locks of age are gray: he leans forward on his ſtaff; young Gaul is near the hero, hearing the battles of his youth. Often did he riſe, in the fire of his ſoul, at the mighty deeds of Morni.

THE aged heard the ſound of Oſſian's ſhield: he knew the ſign of battle. He ſtarted at once

* He alludes to a battle wherein Fingal had defeated Lathmon. The occaſion of this firſt war, between thoſe heroes, is told by Oſſian in another poem, which the tranſlator has ſeen.

† Morni was chief of a numerous tribe, in the days of Fingal and his father Comhal. The laſt mentioned hero was killed in battle againſt Morni's tribe; but the valour and conduct of Fingal reduced them, at laſt, to obedience. We find the two heroes perfectly reconciled in this poem.

‡ Stru'-moné, *ſtream of the hill.* Here the proper name of a rivulet in the neighbourhood of Selma.

from

from his place. His gray hair parted on his back. He remembers the actions of other years. My ſon, he ſaid to fair-haired Gaul, I hear the ſound of battle. The king of Morven is returned, the ſign of war is heard. Go to the halls of Strumon, and bring his arms to Morni. Bring the arms which my father wore in his age, for my arm begins to fail. Take thou thy armour, O Gaul; and ruſh to the firſt of thy battles. Let thine arm reach to the renown of thy fathers. Be thy courſe in the field, like the eagle's wing. Why ſhouldſt thou fear death, my ſon! the valiant fall with fame; their ſhields turn the dark ſtream of danger away, and renown dwells on their gray hairs. Doſt thou not ſee, O Gaul, how the ſteps of my age are honoured? Morni moves forth, and the young meet him, with reverence, and turn their eyes, with ſilent joy, on his courſe. But I never fled from danger, my ſon! my ſword lightened through the darkneſs of battle. The ſtranger melted before me; the mighty were blaſted in my preſence.

GAUL brought the arms to Morni: the aged warrior covered himſelf with ſteel. He took the ſpear in his hand, which was often ſtained with the blood of the valiant. He came towards Fingal, his ſon attended his ſteps. The

ſon of Comhal rejoiced over the warrior, when he came in the locks of his age.

KING of the roaring Strumon! ſaid the riſing joy of Fingal; do I behold thee in arms, after thy ſtrength has failed? Often has Morni ſhone in battles, like the beam of the riſing ſun; when he diſperſes the ſtorms of the hill, and brings peace to the glittering fields. But why didſt thou not reſt in thine age? Thy renown is in the ſong. The people behold thee, and bleſs the departure of mighty Morni. Why didſt thou not reſt in thine age? For the foe will vaniſh before Fingal.

SON of Comhal, replied the chief, the ſtrength of Morni's arm has failed. I attempt to draw the ſword of my youth, but it remains in its place. I throw the ſpear, but it falls ſhort of the mark; and I feel the weight of my ſhield. We decay, like the graſs of the mountain, and our ſtrength returns no more. I have a ſon, O Fingal, his ſoul has delighted in the actions of Morni's youth; but his ſword has not been lifted againſt the foe, neither has his fame begun. I come with him to battle; to direct his arm. His renown will be a ſun to my ſoul, in the dark hour of my departure. O that the name of Morni were forgot among the people! that

that the heroes would only ſay, "Behold the fa-
"ther of Gaul!"

KING of Strumon, Fingal replied, Gaul ſhall lift the ſword in battle. But he ſhall lift it before Fingal; my arm ſhall defend his youth. But reſt thou in the halls of Selma; and hear of our renown. Bid the harp be ſtrung; and the voice of the bard ariſe, that thoſe who fall may rejoice in their fame; and the ſoul of Morni brighten with gladneſs.——Oſſian! thou haſt fought in battles: the blood of ſtrangers is on thy ſpear: let thy courſe be with Gaul in the ſtrife; but depart not from the ſide of Fingal; leſt the foe find you alone; and your fame fail at once.

I SAW * Gaul in his arms, and my ſoul was mixed with his: for the fire of the battle was in his eyes! he looked to the foe with joy. We ſpoke the words of friendſhip in ſecret; and the lightning of our ſwords poured together; for we drew them behind the wood, and tried the ſtrength of our arms on the empty air.

NIGHT came down on Morven. Fingal ſat at the beam of the oak. Morni ſat by his ſide with all his gray waving locks. Their diſcourſe

* Oſſian ſpeaks. The contraſt between the old and young heroes is ſtrongly marked. The circumſtance of the latter's drawing their ſwords is well imagined, and agrees with the impatience of young ſoldiers, juſt entered upon action.

is of other times, and the actions of their fathers. Three bards, at times, touched the harp; and Ullin was near with his ſong. He ſung of the mighty Comhal; but darkneſs gathered * on Morni's brow. He rolled his red eye on Ullin; and the ſong of the bard ceaſed. Fingal obſerved the aged hero, and he mildly ſpoke.

CHIEF of Strumon, why that darkneſs? Let the days of other years be forgot. Our fathers contended in battle; but we meet together, at the feaſt. Our ſwords are turned on the foes, and they melt before us on the field. Let the days of our fathers be forgot, king of moſſy Strumon.

KING of Morven, replied the chief, I remember thy father with joy. He was terrible in battle; the rage † of the chief was deadly. My eyes were full of tears, when the king of heroes fell. The valiant fall, O Fingal, and the feeble

* Ullin had choſen ill the ſubject of his ſong. The *darkneſs which gathered on Morni's brow*, did not proceed from any diſlike he had to Comhal's name, though they were foes, but from his fear that the ſong would awaken Fingal to remembrance of the feuds which had ſubſiſted of old between the families. Fingal's ſpeech on this occaſion abounds with generoſity and good ſenſe.

† This expreſſion is ambiguous in the original. It either ſignifies that Comhal killed many in battle, or that he was implacable in his reſentment. The tranſlator has endeavoured to preſerve the ſame ambiguity in the verſion; as it was probably deſigned by the poet.

remain

remain on the hills. How many heroes have paſſed away, in the days of Morni! And I did not ſhun the battle; neither did I fly from the ſtrife of the valiant.

Now let the friends of Fingal reſt; for the night is around; that they may riſe, with ſtrength, to battle againſt car-borne Lathmon. I hear the ſound of his hoſt, like thunder heard on a diſtant heath. Oſſian! and fair-haired Gaul! ye are ſwift in the race. Obſerve the foes of Fingal from that woody hill. But approach them not, your fathers are not near to ſhield you. Let not your fame fall at once. The valour of youth may fail.

We heard the words of the chief with joy, and moved in the clang of our arms. Our ſteps are on the woody hill. Heaven burns with all its ſtars. The meteors of death fly over the field. The diſtant noiſe of the foe reached our ears. It was then Gaul ſpoke, in his valour; his hand half-unſheathed the ſword.

Son of Fingal, he ſaid, why burns the ſoul of Gaul? My heart beats high. My ſteps are diſordered; and my hand trembles on my ſword. When I look towards the foe, my ſoul lightens before me, and I ſee their ſleeping hoſt. Tremble thus the ſouls of the valiant in battles of the ſpear?——How would the ſoul of Morni

riſe if we ſhould ruſh on the foe! Our renown would grow in the ſong; and our ſteps be ſtately in the eyes of the brave.

Son of Morni, I replied, my ſoul delights in battle. I delight to ſhine in battle alone, and to give my name to the bards. But what if the foe ſhould prevail; ſhall I behold the eyes of the king? They are terrible in his diſpleaſure, and like the flames of death.---But I will not behold them in his wrath. Oſſian ſhall prevail or fall. But ſhall the fame of the vanquiſhed riſe?--- They paſs away like a ſhadow. But the fame of Oſſian ſhall riſe. His deeds ſhall be like his fathers. Let us ruſh in our arms; ſon of Morni, let us ruſh to battle. Gaul! if thou ſhalt return, go to Selma's lofty wall. Tell to Evirallin * that I fell with fame; carry this ſword to Branno's daughter. Let her give it to Oſcar, when the years of his youth ſhall ariſe.

Son of Fingal, Gaul replied with a ſigh; ſhall I return after Oſſian is low!---What would my father ſay, and Fingal king of men? The feeble would turn their eyes and ſay, "Behold the "mighty Gaul who left his friend in his blood!"

* Oſſian had married her a little time before. The ſtory of his courtſhip of this lady is introduced, as an epiſode, in the fourth book of Fingal.

Ye ſhall not behold me, ye feeble, but in the midſt of my renown. Oſſian! I have heard from my father the mighty deeds of heroes; their mighty deeds when alone; for the ſoul increaſes in danger.

Son of Morni, I replied and ſtrode before him on the heath, our fathers ſhall praiſe our valour, when they mourn our fall. A beam of gladneſs ſhall riſe on their ſouls, when their eyes are full of tears. They will ſay, "Our ſons have "not fallen like the graſs of the field, for they "ſpread death around them."——But why ſhould we think of the narrow houſe? The ſword defends the valiant. But death purſues the flight of the feeble; and their renown is not heard.

We ruſhed forward through night; and came to the roar of a ſtream which bent its blue courſe round the foe, through trees that echoed to its noiſe; we came to the bank of the ſtream, and ſaw the ſleeping hoſt. Their fires were decayed on the plain; and the lonely ſteps of their ſcouts were diſtant far. I ſtretched my ſpear before me to ſupport my ſteps over the ſtream. But Gaul took my hand, and ſpoke the words of the valiant.

SHALL * the ſon of Fingal ruſh on a ſleeping foe? Shall he come like a blaſt by night when it overturns the young trees in ſecret? Fingal did not thus receive his fame, nor dwells renown on the gray hairs of Morni, for actions like theſe. Strike, Oſſian, ſtrike the ſhield of battle, and let their thouſands riſe. Let them meet Gaul in his firſt battle, that he may try the ſtrength of his arm.

MY ſoul rejoiced over the warrior, and my burſting tears deſcended. And the foe ſhall meet Gaul, I ſaid: the fame of Morni's ſon ſhall ariſe. But ruſh not too far, my hero: let the gleam of thy ſteel be near to Oſſian. Let our hands join in ſlaughter.——Gaul! doſt thou not behold that rock? Its gray ſide dimly gleams to the ſtars. If the foe ſhall prevail, let our back be towards the rock. Then ſhall they fear to approach our ſpears; for death is in our hands.

I STRUCK thrice my echoing ſhield. The ſtarting foe aroſe. We ruſhed on in the ſound

* This propoſal of Gaul is much more noble, and more agreeable to true heroiſm, than the behaviour of Ulyſſes and Diomed in the Iliad, or that of Niſus and Euryalus in the Æneid. What his valour and generoſity ſuggeſted became the foundation of his ſucceſs. For the enemy being diſmayed with the ſound of Oſſian's ſhield, which was the common ſignal of battle, thought that Fingal's whole army came to attack them; ſo that they fly in reality from an army, not from two heroes; which reconciles the ſtory to probability.

of

of our arms. Their crowded ſteps fly over the heath; for they thought that the mighty Fingal came; and the ſtrength of their arms withered away. The ſound of their flight was like that of flame, when it ruſhes through the blaſted groves.

It was then the ſpear of Gaul flew in its ſtrength: it was then his ſword aroſe. Cremor fell; and mighty Leth. Dunthormo ſtruggled in his blood. The ſteel ruſhed through Crotha's ſide, as bent, he roſe on his ſpear; the black ſtream poured from the wound, and hiſſed on the half-extinguiſhed oak. Cathmin ſaw the ſteps of the hero behind him, and aſcended a blaſted tree; but the ſpear pierced him from behind. Shrieking, panting, he fell; moſs and withered branches purſue his fall, and ſtrew the blue arms of Gaul.

Such were thy deeds, ſon of Morni, in the firſt of thy battles. Nor ſlept the ſword by thy ſide, thou laſt of Fingal's race! Oſſian ruſhed forward in his ſtrength, and the people fell before him; as the graſs by the ſtaff of the boy, when he whiſtles along the field, and the gray beard of the thiſtle falls. But careleſs the youth moves on; his ſteps are towards the deſart.

Gray morning roſe around us, the winding ſtreams are bright along the heath. The foe ga-

thered on a hill; and the rage of Lathmon roſe. He bent the red eye of his wrath: he is ſilent in his riſing grief. He often ſtruck his boſſy ſhield; and his ſteps are unequal on the heath. I ſaw the diſtant darkneſs of the hero, and I ſpoke to Morni's ſon.

CAR-BORNE * chief of Strumon, doſt thou behold the foe? They gather on the hill in their wrath. Let our ſteps be towards the king †. He ſhall riſe in his ſtrength, and the hoſt of Lathmon vaniſh. Our fame is around us, warrior, the eyes of the aged ‡ will rejoice. But let us fly, ſon of Morni, Lathmon deſcends the hill.

THEN let our ſteps § be ſlow, replied the fair-haired Gaul; leſt the foe ſay, with a ſmile, "Behold the warriors of night, they are, like

* Car-borne is a title of honour beſtowed, by Oſſian, indiſcriminately on every hero; as every chief, in his time, kept a chariot or litter by way of ſtate.

† Fingal.

‡ Fingal and Morni.

§ The behaviour of Gaul, throughout this poem, is that of a hero in the moſt exalted ſenſe. The modeſty of Oſſian, concerning his own actions, is not leſs remarkable than his impartiality with regard to Gaul, for it is well known that Gaul afterwards rebelled againſt Fingal, which might be ſuppoſed to have bred prejudices againſt him in the breaſt of Oſſian. But as Gaul, from an enemy, became Fingal's firmeſt friend and greateſt hero, the poet paſſes over one ſlip in his conduct, on account of his many virtues.

"ghoſts,

" ghoſts, terrible in darkneſs, but they melt " away before the beam of the eaſt." Oſſian, take the ſhield of Gormar who fell beneath thy ſpear, that the aged heroes may rejoice, when they ſhall behold the actions of their ſons.

SUCH were our words on the plain, when Sulmath * came to car-borne Lathmon: Sulmath chief of Dutha at the dark-rolling ſtream of Duvranna †. Why doſt thou not ruſh, ſon of Nuäth, with a thouſand of thy heroes? Why doſt thou not deſcend with thy hoſt, before the warriors fly? Their blue arms are beaming to the riſing light, and their ſteps are before us on the heath.

SON of the feeble hand, ſaid Lathmon, ſhall my hoſt deſcend! They ‡ are but two, ſon of Dutha,

* Suil-mhath, *a man of good eye-ſight.*

† Dubh-bhranna, *dark mountain-ſtream.* What river went by this name, in the days of Oſſian, is not eaſily aſcertained, at this diſtance of time. A river in Scotland, which falls into the ſea at Banff, ſtill retains the name of Duvran. If that is meant, by Oſſian, in this paſſage, Lathmon muſt have been a prince of the Pictiſh nation, or thoſe Caledonians who inhabited of old the eaſtern coaſt of Scotland.

‡ Oſſian ſeldom fails to give his heroes, though enemies, that generoſity of temper which, it appears from his poems, was a conſpicuous part of his own character. Thoſe who too much deſpiſe their enemies do not reflect, that the more they take from the valour of their foes, the leſs merit they have themſelves in conquering them. The cuſtom of depreciating enemies is not altogether one of the refinements of modern heroiſm. This

railing

Dutha, and ſhall a thouſand lift their ſteel! Nuäth would mourn, in his hall, for the departure of his fame. His eyes would turn from Lathmon, when the tread of his feet approached. ——Go thou to the heroes, chief of Dutha, for I behold the ſtately ſteps of Oſſian. His fame is worthy of my ſteel; let him fight with Lathmon.

THE noble Sulmath came. I rejoiced in the words of the king. I raiſed the ſhield on my arm; and Gaul placed in my hand the ſword of Morni. We returned to the murmuring ſtream; Lathmon came in his ſtrength. His dark hoſt rolled, like the clouds, behind him: but the ſon of Nuäth was bright in his ſteel.

SON of Fingal, ſaid the hero, thy fame has grown on our fall. How many lie there of my people by thy hand, thou king of men! Lift now thy ſpear againſt Lathmon; and lay the ſon of Nuäth low. Lay him low among his people, or thou thyſelf muſt fall. It ſhall never be told in my halls that my warriors fell in my preſence; that they fell in the preſence of Lathmon when

railing diſpoſition is one of the capital faults in Homer's characters, which, by the bye, cannot be imputed to the poet, who kept to the manners of the times of which he wrote. Milton has followed Homer in this reſpect; but railing is leſs ſhocking in infernal ſpirits, who are the objects of horror, than in heroes, who are ſet up as patterns of imitation.

his

his ſword reſted by his ſide: the blue eyes of Cutha * would roll in tears, and her ſteps be lonely in the vales of Dunlathmon.

NEITHER ſhall it be told, I replied, that the ſon of Fingal fled. Were his ſteps covered with darkneſs, yet would not Oſſian fly; his ſoul would meet him and ſay, "Does the bard of "Selma fear the foe?" No: he does not fear the foe. His joy is in the midſt of battle.

LATHMON came on with his ſpear, and pierced the ſhield of Oſſian. I felt the cold ſteel at my ſide; and drew the ſword of Morni: I cut the ſpear in twain; the bright point fell glittering on the ground. The ſon of Nuäth burnt in his wrath, and lifted high his ſounding ſhield. His dark eyes rolled above it, as bending forward, it ſhone like a gate of braſs. But Oſſian's ſpear pierced the brightneſs of its boſſes, and ſunk in a tree that roſe behind. The ſhield hung on the quivering lance! but Lathmon ſtill advanced. Gaul foreſaw the fall of the chief, and ſtretched his buckler before my ſword; when it deſcended, in a ſtream of light over the king of Dunlathmon.

LATHMON beheld the ſon of Morni, and the tear ſtarted from his eye. He threw the ſword

* Cutha appears to have been Lathmon's wife or miſtreſs.

of

of his fathers on the ground, and ſpoke the words of the valiant. Why ſhould Lathmon fight againſt the firſt of mortal men? Your ſouls are beams from heaven; your ſwords the flames of death. Who can equal the renown of the heroes, whoſe actions are ſo great in youth! O that ye were in the halls of Nuäth, in the green dwelling of Lathmon! then would my father ſay, that his ſon did not yield to the feeble.--- But who comes, a mighty ſtream, along the echoing heath? the little hills are troubled before him, and a thouſand ſpirits are on the beams of his ſteel; the ſpirits * of thoſe who are to fall by the arm of the king of reſounding Morven.--- Happy art thou, O Fingal, thy ſons ſhall fight thy battles; they go forth before thee; and they return with the ſteps of renown.

FINGAL came, in his mildneſs, rejoicing in ſecret over the actions of his ſon. Morni's face brightened with gladneſs, and his aged eyes looked faintly through the tears of joy. We came to the halls of Selma, and ſat round the feaſt of ſhells. The maids of the ſong came into our preſence, and the mildly bluſhing Evirallin. Her dark hair ſpread on her neck of ſnow, her

* It was thought, in Oſſian's time, that each perſon had his attending ſpirit. The traditions concerning this opinion are dark and unſatisfactory.

eye

eye rolled in ſecret on Oſſian; ſhe touched the harp of muſic, and we bleſſed the daughter of Branno.

FINGAL roſe in his place, and ſpoke to Dunlathmon's battling king. The ſword of Trenmor trembled by his ſide, as he lifted up his mighty arm. Son of Nuäth, he ſaid, why doſt thou ſearch for fame in Morven? We are not of the race of the feeble; nor do our ſwords gleam over the weak. When did we come to Dunlathmon, with the ſound of war? Fingal does not delight in battle, though his arm is ſtrong. My renown grows on the fall of the haughty. The lightning of my ſteel pours on the proud in arms. The battle comes; and the tombs of the valiant riſe; the tombs of my people riſe, O my fathers! and I at laſt muſt remain alone. But I will remain renowned, and the departure of my ſoul ſhall be one ſtream of light. Lathmon! retire to thy place. Turn thy battles to other lands. The race of Morven are renowned, and their foes are the ſons of the unhappy.

OITHONA:

OITHÓNA:

A POEM*.

DARKNESS dwells around Dunlathmon, though the moon ſhews half her face on the hill. The daughter of night turns her eyes away; for ſhe beholds the grief that is coming.---The

* Gaul, the ſon of Morni, attended Lathmon into his own country, after his being defeated in Morven, as related in the preceding poem. He was kindly entertained by Nuäth, the father of Lathmon, and fell in love with his daughter Oithóna. ——The lady was no leſs enamoured of Gaul, and a day was fixed for their marriage. In the mean time Fingal, preparing for an expedition into the country of the Britons, ſent for Gaul. He obeyed, and went; but not without promiſing to Oithóna to return, if he ſurvived the war, by a certain day.—Lathmon too was obliged to attend his father Nuäth in his wars, and Oithóna was left alone at Dunlathmon, the ſeat of the family.—Dunrommath, lord of Uthal, ſuppoſed to be one of the Orkneys, taking advantage of the abſence of her friends, came and carried off, by force, Oithóna, who had formerly rejected his love, into Tromathon, a deſart iſland, where he concealed her in a cave.

Gaul returned on the day appointed; heard of the rape, and ſailed to Tromáthon, to revenge himſelf on Dunrommath. When he landed, he found Oithóna diſconſolate, and reſolved not to ſurvive the loſs of her honour.—She told him the ſtory of her misfortunes, and ſhe ſcarce ended, when Dunrommath, with

The ſon of Morni is on the plain; but there is no ſound in the hall. No long-ſtreaming * beam of light comes trembling through the gloom. The voice of Oithóna † is not heard amidſt the noiſe of the ſtreams of Duvranna.——

WHITHER art thou gone in thy beauty, dark-haired daughter of Nuäth? Lathmon is in the field of the valiant, but thou didſt promiſe to remain in the hall; thou didſt promiſe to remain in the hall till the ſon of Morni returned. Till he returned from Strumon, to the maid of his love. The tear was on thy cheek at his departure: the ſigh roſe in ſecret in thy breaſt. But thou doſt not come to meet him, with ſongs, with the lightly-trembling ſound of the harp.——

with his followers, appeared at the further end of the iſland. Gaul prepared to attack him, recommending to Oithóna to retire, till the battle was over.—She ſeemingly obeyed; but ſhe ſecretly armed herſelf, ruſhed into the thickeſt of the battle, and was mortally wounded.—Gaul purſuing the flying enemy, found her juſt expiring on the field: he mourned over her, raiſed her tomb, and returned to Morven.——Thus is the ſtory handed down by tradition; nor is it given with any material difference in the poem, which opens with Gaul's return to Dunlathmon, after the rape of Oithóna.

* Some gentle taper
——viſit us
With thy long levelled rule of ſtreaming light.
MILTON.

† Oi-thóna, *the virgin of the wave.*

SUCH were the words of Gaul, when he came to Dunlathmon's towers. The gates were open and dark. The winds were bluſtering in the hall. The trees ſtrowed the threſhold with leaves; and the murmur of night was abroad. ---Sad and ſilent, at a rock, the ſon of Morni ſat: his ſoul trembled for the maid; but he knew not whither to turn his courſe. The ſon * of Leth ſtood at a diſtance, and heard the winds in his buſhy hair. But he did not raiſe his voice, for he ſaw the ſorrow of Gaul.

SLEEP deſcended on the heroes. The viſions of night aroſe. Oithóna ſtood in a dream, before the eyes of Morni's ſon. Her dark hair was looſe and diſordered: her lovely eye rolled in tears. Blood ſtained her ſnowy arm. The robe half hid the wound of her breaſt. She ſtood over the chief, and her voice was heard.

SLEEPS the ſon of Morni, he that was lovely in the eyes of Oithóna? Sleeps Gaul at the diſtant rock, and the daughter of Nuäth low? The ſea rolls round the dark iſle of Tromáthon; I ſit in my tears in the cave. Nor do I ſit alone, O Gaul, the dark chief of Cuthal is there. He is

* Morlo, the ſon of Leth, is one of Fingal's moſt famous heroes. He and three other men attended Gaul on his expedition to Tromathon.

there

there in the rage of his love.---And what can Oithóna do?

A ROUGHER blaſt ruſhed through the oak. The dream of night departed. Gaul took his aſpen ſpear; he ſtood in the rage of wrath. Often did his eyes turn to the eaſt, and accuſe the lagging light.---At length the morning came forth. The hero lifted up the ſail. The winds came ruſtling from the hill; and he bounded on the waves of the deep.---On the third day aroſe Tromathon *, like a blue ſhield in the midſt of the ſea. The white wave roared againſt its rocks; ſad Oithóna ſat on the coaſt. She looked on the rolling waters, and her tears deſcend. ——But when ſhe ſaw Gaul in his arms, ſhe ſtarted and turned her eyes away. Her lovely cheek is bent and red; her white arm trembles by her ſide.---Thrice ſhe ſtrove to fly from his preſence; but her ſteps failed her as ſhe went.

* ἐφάνη ὄρεα σκιόεντα
Γαίης Φαιηκων,——
——ὥς ὅτε ῥίνον ἐν ηεροειδεῖ ποντῳ.

HOM. Od. v. 280.

Then ſwell'd to fight Phæacia's duſky coaſt,
And woody mountains half in vapours loſt;
That lay before him indiſtinct and vaſt,
Like a broad ſhield amid the watry waſte.

Tróm-thón, *heavy or deep-ſounding wave.*

DAUGHTER of Nuäth, ſaid the hero, why doſt thou fly from Gaul? Do my eyes ſend forth the flame of death? Or darkens hatred in my ſoul? Thou art to me the beam of the eaſt riſing in a land unknown. But thou covereſt thy face with ſadneſs, daughter of high Dunlathmon! Is the foe of Oithóna near? My ſoul burns to meet him in battle. The ſword trembles on the ſide of Gaul, and longs to glitter in his hand. ——Speak, daughter of Nuäth, doſt thou not behold my tears?

CAR-BORNE chief of Strumon, replied the ſighing maid, why comeſt thou over the dark-blue wave to Nuäth's mournful daughter? Why did I not paſs away in ſecret, like the flower of the rock, that lifts its fair head unſeen, and ſtrows its withered leaves on the blaſt? Why didſt thou come, O Gaul, to hear my departing ſigh? I paſs away in my youth; and my name ſhall not be heard. Or it will be heard with ſorrow, and the tears of Nuäth will fall. Thou wilt be ſad, ſon of Morni, for the fallen fame of Oithóna. But ſhe ſhall ſleep in the narrow tomb, far from the voice of the mourner.——Why didſt thou come, chief of Strumon, to the ſea-beat rocks of Tromathon.

I CAME to meet thy foes, daughter of car-borne Nuäth! the death of Cuthal's chief darkens

kens before me; or Morni's ſon ſhall fall.---Oithóna! when Gaul is low, raiſe my tomb on that oozy rock; and when the dark-bounding ſhip ſhall paſs, call the ſons of the ſea; call them, and give this ſword, that they may carry it to Morni's hall; that the grey-haired hero may ceaſe to look towards the deſart for the return of his ſon.

And ſhall the daughter of Nuäth live, ſhe replied with a burſting ſigh? Shall I live in Tromáthon, and the ſon of Morni low? My heart is not of that rock; nor my ſoul careleſs as that ſea, which lifts its blue waves to every wind, and rolls beneath the ſtorm. The blaſt which ſhall lay thee low, ſhall ſpread the branches of Oithóna on earth. We ſhall wither together, ſon of car-borne Morni!——The narrow houſe is pleaſant to me, and the gray ſtone of the dead: for never more will I leave thy rocks, ſea-ſurrounded Tromáthon!---Night * came on with her clouds, after the departure of Lathmon, when he went to the wars of his fathers, to the moſs-covered rock of Duthórmoth; night came on, and I ſat in the hall, at the beam of the oak. The wind was abroad in the trees. I heard the ſound of arms. Joy roſe in my face;

* Oithóna relates how ſhe was carried away by Dunrommath.

for I thought of thy return. It was the chief of Cuthal, the red-haired ſtrength of Dunrommath. His eyes rolled in fire: the blood of my people was on his ſword. They who defended Oithóna fell by the gloomy chief.——What could I do? My arm was weak; it could not lift the ſpear. He took me in my grief, amidſt my tears he raiſed the ſail. He feared the returning ſtrength of Lathmon, the brother of unhappy Oithóna. ——But behold, he comes with his people! the dark wave is divided before him!---Whither wilt thou turn thy ſteps, ſon of Morni? Many are the warriors of Dunrommath!

My ſteps never turned from battle, replied the hero, as he unſheathed his ſword; and ſhall I begin to fear, Oithóna, when thy foes are near? Go to thy cave, daughter of Nuäth, till our battle ceaſe. Son of Leth, bring the bows of our fathers; and the ſounding quiver of Morni. Let our three warriors bend the yew. Ourſelves will lift the ſpear. They are an hoſt on the rock; but our ſouls are ſtrong.

The daughter of Nuäth went to the cave: a troubled joy roſe on her mind, like the red path of the lightning on a ſtormy cloud.---Her ſoul was reſolved, and the tear was dried from her wildly-looking eye.---Dunrommath ſlowly approached; for he ſaw the ſon of Morni. Contempt

tempt contracted his face, a ſmile is on his dark-brown cheek; his red eye rolled, half-conceal'd, beneath his ſhaggy brows.

WHENCE are the ſons of the ſea, begun the gloomy chief? Have the winds driven you to the rocks of Tromáthon? Or come you in ſearch of the white-handed daughter of Nuäth? The ſons of the unhappy, ye feeble men, come to the hand of Dunrommath. His eyes ſpares not the weak; and he delights in the blood of ſtrangers. Oithóna is a beam of light, and the chief of Cuthal enjoys it in ſecret; would thou come on its lovelineſs like a cloud, ſon of the feeble hand!---Thou mayſt come, but ſhalt thou return to the halls of thy fathers?

DOST thou not know me, ſaid Gaul, red-haired chief of Cuthal? Thy feet were ſwift on the heath, in the battle of car-borne Lathmon; when the ſword of Morni's ſon purſued his hoſt, in Morven's woody land. Dunrommath! thy words are mighty, for thy warriors gather behind thee. But do I fear them, ſon of pride? I am not of the race of the feeble.

GAUL advanced in his arms; Dunrommath ſhrunk behind his people. But the ſpear of Gaul pierced the gloomy chief, and his ſword lopped off his head, as it bended in death.—— The ſon of Morni ſhook it thrice by the lock;

the warriors of Dunrommath fled. The arrows of Morven purſued them: ten fell on the moſſy rocks. The reſt lift the ſounding ſail, and bound on the echoing deep.

GAUL advanced towards the cave of Oithóna. He beheld a youth leaning againſt a rock. An arrow had pierced his ſide; and his eye rolled faintly beneath his helmet.---The ſoul of Morni's ſon is ſad, he came and ſpoke the words of peace.

CAN the hand of Gaul heal thee, youth of the mournful brow? I have ſearched for the herbs of the mountains; I have gathered them on the ſecret banks of their ſtreams. My hand has cloſed the wound of the valiant, and their eyes have bleſſed the ſon of Morni. Where dwelt thy fathers, warrior? Were they of the ſons of the mighty? Sadneſs ſhall come, like night, on thy native ſtreams; for thou art fallen in thy youth.——

MY fathers, replied the ſtranger, were of the ſons of the mighty; but they ſhall not be ſad; for my fame is departed like morning miſt. High walls riſe on the banks of Duvranna; and ſee their moſſy towers in the ſtream; a rock aſcends behind them with its bending firs. Thou mayſt behold it far diſtant. There my brother dwells.

dwells. He is renowned in battle: give him this glittering helmet.

THE helmet fell from the hand of Gaul; for it was the wounded Oithóna. She had armed herſelf in the cave, and came in ſearch of death. Her heavy eyes are half cloſed; the blood pours from her ſide.——

SON of Morni, ſhe ſaid, prepare the narrow tomb. Sleep comes, like a cloud, on my ſoul. The eyes of Oithóna are dim. O had I dwelt at Duvranna, in the bright beam of my fame! then had my years come on with joy; and the virgins would bleſs my ſteps. But I fall in youth, ſon of Morni, and my father ſhall bluſh in his hall.——

SHE fell pale on the rock of Tromáthon. The mournful hero raiſed her tomb.——He came to Morven; but we ſaw the darkneſs of his ſoul. Oſſian took the harp in the praiſe of Oithóna. The brightneſs of the face of Gaul returned. But his ſigh roſe, at times, in the midſt of his friends, like blaſts that ſhake their unfrequent wings, after the ſtormy winds are laid.

CROMA:

A POEM*.

IT was the voice of my love! few are his viſits to the dreams of Malvina! Open your airy halls, ye fathers of mighty Toſcar. Unfold the gates of your clouds; the ſteps of Mal-

* Malvina the daughter of Toſcar is overheard by Oſſian lamenting the death of Oſcar her lover. Oſſian, to divert her grief, relates his own actions in an expedition which he undertook, at Fingal's command, to aid Crothar the petty king of Croma, a country in Ireland, againſt Rothmar who invaded his dominions. The ſtory is delivered down thus, in tradition. Crothar king of Croma being blind with age, and his ſon too young for the field, Rothmar the chief of Tromlo reſolved to avail himſelf of the opportunity offered of annexing the dominions of Crothar to his own. He accordingly marched into the country ſubject to Crothar, but which he held of Arth or Artho, who was, at the time, ſupreme king of Ireland.

Crothar being, on account of his age and blindneſs, unfit for action, ſent for aid to Fingal king of Scotland; who ordered his ſon Oſſian to the relief of Crothar. But before his arrival Fovargormo, the ſon of Crothar, attacking Rothmar, was ſlain himſelf, and his forces totally defeated. Oſſian renewed the war; came to battle, killed Rothmar, and routed his army. Croma being thus delivered of its enemies, Oſſian returned to Scotland.

vina's

vina's departure are near. I have heard a voice in my dream. I feel the fluttering of my ſoul. Why didſt thou come, O blaſt, from the dark-rolling of the lake? Thy ruſtling wing was in the trees, the dream of Malvina departed. But ſhe beheld her love, when his robe of miſt flew on the wind; the beam of the ſun was on his ſkirts, they glittered like the gold of the ſtranger. It was the voice of my love! few are his viſits to my dreams!

But thou dwelleſt in the ſoul of Malvina, ſon of mighty Oſſian. My ſighs ariſe with the beam of the eaſt; my tears deſcend with the drops of night. I was a lovely tree, in thy preſence, Oſcar, with all my branches round me; but thy death came like a blaſt from the deſart, and laid my green head low; the ſpring returned with its ſhowers, but no leaf of mine aroſe. The virgins ſaw me ſilent in the hall, and they touched the harp of joy. The tear was on the cheek of Malvina: the virgins beheld me in my grief. Why art thou ſad, they ſaid; thou firſt of the maids of Lutha? Was he lovely as the beam of the morning, and ſtately in thy ſight?

Pleasant is thy ſong in Oſſian's ear, daughter of ſtreamy Lutha! Thou haſt heard the muſic of departed bards in the dream of thy reſt, when

when ſleep fell on thine eyes, at the murmur of Moruth *. When thou didſt return from the chace, in the day of the ſun, thou haſt heard the muſic of the bards, and thy ſong is lovely. It is lovely, O Malvina, but it melts the ſoul. There is a joy in grief when peace dwells in the breaſt of the ſad. But ſorrow waſtes the mournful, O daughter of Toſcar, and their days are few. They fall away, like the flower on which the ſun looks in his ſtrength after the mildew has paſſed over it, and its head is heavy with the drops of night. Attend to the tale of Oſſian, O maid; he remembers the days of his youth.

THE king commanded; I raiſed my ſails, and ruſhed into the bay of Croma; into Croma's ſounding bay in lovely Innis-fail †. High on the coaſt aroſe the towers of Crothar king of ſpears; Crothar renowned in the battles of his youth; but age dwelt then around the chief. Rothmar raiſed the ſword againſt the hero; and the wrath of Fingal burned. He ſent Oſſian to meet Rothmar in battle, for the chief of Croma was the companion of his youth.

I SENT the bard before me with ſongs; I came into the hall of Crothar. There ſat the hero

* Mor'-ruth, *great ſtream.*

† *Innis-fail,* one of the ancient names of Ireland.

amidſt

amidſt the arms of his fathers, but his eyes had failed. His gray locks waved around a ſtaff, on which the warrior leaned. He hummed the ſong of other times, when the ſound of our arms reached his ears. Crothar roſe, ſtretched his aged hand, and bleſſed the ſon of Fingal.

OSSIAN! ſaid the hero, the ſtrength of Crothar's arm has failed. O could I lift the ſword, as on the day that Fingal fought at Strutha! He was the firſt of mortal men; but Crothar had alſo his fame. The king of Morven praiſed me, and he placed on my arm the boſſy ſhield of Calthar, whom the hero had ſlain in war. Doſt thou not behold it on the wall, for Crothar's eyes have failed? Is thy ſtrength, like thy fathers, Oſſian? let the aged feel thine arm.

I GAVE my arm to the king; he feels it with his aged hands. The ſigh roſe in his breaſt, and his tears deſcended. Thou art ſtrong, my ſon, he ſaid, but not like the king of Morven. But who is like that hero among the mighty in war! Let the feaſt of my halls be ſpread; and let my bards raiſe the ſong. Great is he that is within my walls, ſons of echoing Croma!

THE feaſt is ſpread. The harp is heard; and joy is in the hall. But it was joy covering a ſigh, that darkly dwelt in every breaſt. It was like the faint beam of the moon ſpread on a cloud

cloud in heaven. At length the muſic ceaſed, and the aged king of Croma ſpoke; he ſpoke without a tear, but the ſigh ſwelled in the midſt of his voice.

Son of Fingal! doſt thou not behold the darkneſs of Crothar's hall of ſhells? My ſoul was not dark at the feaſt, when my people lived. I rejoiced in the preſence of ſtrangers, when my ſon ſhone in the hall. But, Oſſian, he is a beam that is departed, and left no ſtreak of light behind. He is fallen, ſon of Fingal, in the battles of his father.——Rothmar the chief of graſſy Tromlo heard that my eyes had failed; he heard that my arms were fixed in the hall, and the pride of his ſoul aroſe. He came towards Croma; my people fell before him. I took my arms in the hall, but what could ſightleſs Crothar do? My ſteps were unequal; my grief was great. I wiſhed for the days that were paſt. Days! wherein I fought; and conquered in the field of blood. My ſon returned from the chace; the fair-haired Fovar-gormo *. He had not lifted his ſword in battle, for his arm was young. But the ſoul of the youth was great; the fire of valour burnt in his eyes. He ſaw the diſordered ſteps of his father, and his ſigh aroſe.

* Faobhar gorm, *the blue point of ſteel.*

King

King of Croma, he ſaid, is it becauſe thou haſt no ſon; is it for the weakneſs of Fovar-gorma's arm that thy ſighs ariſe? I begin, my father, to feel the ſtrength of my arm; I have drawn the ſword of my youth; and I have bent the bow. Let me meet this Rothmar, with the youths of Croma: let me meet him, O my father; for I feel my burning ſoul.

And thou ſhalt meet him, I ſaid, ſon of the ſightleſs Crothar! But let others advance before thee, that I may hear the tread of thy feet at thy return; for my eyes behold thee not, fair-haired Fovar-gormo!——He went, he met the foe; he fell. The foe advances towards Croma. He who ſlew my ſon is near, with all his pointed ſpears.

It is not time to fill the ſhell, I replied, and took my ſpear. My people ſaw the fire of my eyes, and they roſe around. All night we ſtrode along the heath. Gray morning roſe in the eaſt. A green narrow vale appeared before us; nor did it want its blue ſtream. The dark hoſt of Rothmar are on its banks, with all their glittering arms. We fought along the vale; they fled; Rothmar ſunk beneath my ſword. Day had not deſcended in the weſt when I brought his arms to Crothar. The aged hero felt them with his hands; and joy brightened in his ſoul.

THE people gather to the hall; the ſound of the ſhells is heard. Ten harps are ſtrung; five bards advance, and ſing, by turns *, the praiſe of

* Thoſe extempore compoſitions were in great repute among ſucceeding bards. The pieces extant of that kind ſhew more of the good ear, than of the poetical genius of their authors. The tranſlator has only met with one poem of this ſort, which he thinks worthy of being preſerved. It is a thouſand years later than Oſſian, but the authors ſeem to have obſerved his manner, and adopted ſome of his expreſſions. The ſtory of it is this. Five bards, paſſing the night in the houſe of a chief, who was a poet himſelf, went ſeverally to make their obſervations on, and returned with an extempore deſcription of, night. The night happened to be one in October, as appears from the poem; and in the north of Scotland, it has all that variety which the bards aſcribe to it, in their deſcriptions.

FIRST BARD.

NIGHT is dull and dark. The clouds reſt on the hills. No ſtar with green trembling beam; no moon looks from the ſky. I hear the blaſt in the wood; but I hear it diſtant far. The ſtream of the valley murmurs; but its murmur is ſullen and ſad. From the tree at the grave of the dead the long-howling owl is heard. I ſee a dim form on the plain!—It is a ghoſt!—it fades—it flies. Some funeral ſhall paſs this way: the meteor marks the path.

The diſtant dog is howling from the hut of the hill. The ſtag lies on the mountain moſs: the hind is at his ſide. She hears the wind in his branchy horns. She ſtarts, but lies again.

The roe is in the cleft of the rock; the heath-cocks head is beneath his wing. No beaſt, no bird is abroad, but the owl and the howling fox. She on a leafleſs tree: he in a cloud on the hill.

Dark, panting, trembling, ſad the traveller has loſt his way. Through ſhrubs, through thorns, he goes, along the gurgling

of Oſſian; they poured forth their burning ſouls, and the harp anſwered to their voice. The joy of Croma was great: for peace returned to the land. The night came on with ſilence,

rill. He fears the rock and the fen. He fears the ghoſt of night. The old tree groans to the blaſt; the falling branch reſounds. The wind drives the withered burs, clung together, along the graſs. It is the light tread of a ghoſt!—He trembles amidſt the night.

Dark, duſky, howling is night, cloudy, windy, and full of ghoſts! The dead are abroad! my friends, receive me from the night.

SECOND BARD.

The wind is up. The ſhower deſcends. The ſpirit of the mountain ſhrieks. Woods fall from high. Windows flap. The growing river roars. The traveller attempts the ford. Hark that ſhriek! he dies:—The ſtorm drives the horſe from the hill, the goat, the lowing cow. They tremble as drives the ſhower, beſide the mouldering bank.

The hunter ſtarts from ſleep, in his lonely hut; he wakes the fire decayed. His wet dogs ſmoke around him. He fills the chinks with heath. Loud roar two mountain ſtreams which meet beſide his booth.

Sad on the ſide of a hill the wandering ſhepherd ſits. The tree reſounds above him. The ſtream roars down the rock. He waits for the riſing moon to guide him to his home.

Ghoſts ride on the ſtorm to-night. Sweet is their voice between the ſqualls of wind. Their ſongs are of other worlds.

The rain is paſt. The dry wind blows. Streams roar, and windows flap. Cold drops fall from the roof. I ſee the ſtarry ſky. But the ſhower gathers again. The weſt is gloomy and dark. Night is ſtormy and diſmal; receive me, my friends, from night.

THIRD

ſilence, and the morning returned with joy. No foe came in darkneſs, with his glittering ſpear. The joy of Croma was great; for the gloomy Rothmar was fallen.

I RAISED

THIRD BARD.

The wind ſtill ſounds between the hills: and whiſtles through the graſs of the rock. The firs fall from their place. The turfy hut is torn. The clouds, divided, fly over the ſky, and ſhew the burning ſtars. The meteor, token of death! flies ſparkling through the gloom. It reſts on the hill. I ſee the withered fern, the dark-browed rock, the fallen oak. Who is that in his ſhrowd beneath the tree, by the ſtream?

The waves dark-tumble on the lake, and laſh its rocky ſides. The boat is brimful in the cove; the oars on the rocking tide. A maid ſits ſad beſide the rock, and eyes the rolling ſtream. Her lover promiſed to come. She ſaw his boat, when yet it was light, on the lake. Is this his broken boat on the ſhore? Are theſe his groans on the wind?

Hark! the hail rattles around. The flaky ſnow deſcends. The tops of the hills are white. The ſtormy winds abate. Various is the night and cold; receive me, my friends, from night.

FOURTH BARD.

Night is calm and fair; blue, ſtarry, ſettled is night. The winds, with the clouds, are gone. They ſink behind the hill. The moon is up on the mountain. Trees glitter: ſtreams ſhine on the rock. Bright rolls the ſettled lake; bright the ſtream of the vale.

I ſee the trees overturned; the ſhocks of corn on the plain. The wakeful hind rebuilds the ſhocks, and whiſtles on the diſtant field.

Calm, ſettled, fair is night!—Who comes from the place of the dead? That form with the robe of ſnow; white arms and dark-brown hair! It is the daughter of the chief of the people; ſhe

I RAISED my voice for Fovar-gormo, when they laid the chief in earth. The aged Crothar was there, but his ſigh was not heard. He ſearched

ſhe that lately fell! Come, let us view thee, O maid! thou that haſt been the delight of heroes! The blaſt drives the phantom away; white, without form, it aſcends the hill.

The breezes drive the blue miſt, ſlowly over the narrow vale. It riſes on the hill, and joins its head to heaven.—Night is ſettled, calm, blue, ſtarry, bright with the moon. Receive me not, my friends, for lovely is the night.

FIFTH BARD.

Night is calm, but dreary. The moon is in a cloud in the weſt. Slow moves that pale beam along the ſhaded hill. The diſtant wave is heard. The torrent murmurs on the rock. The cock is heard from the booth. More than half the night is paſt. The houſe-wife, groping in the gloom, rekindles the ſettled fire. The hunter thinks that day approaches, and calls his bounding dogs. He aſcends the hill and whiſtles on his way. A blaſt removes the cloud. He ſees the ſtarry plough of the north. Much of the night is to paſs. He nods by the moſſy rock.

Hark! the whirlwind is in the wood! A low murmur in the vale! It is the mighty army of the dead returning from the air.

The moon reſts behind the hill. The beam is ſtill on that lofty rock. Long are the ſhadows of the trees. Now it is dark over all. Night is dreary, ſilent, and dark; receive me, my friends, from night.

The CHIEF.

Let clouds reſt on the hills: ſpirits fly and travellers fear. Let the winds of the woods ariſe, the ſounding ſtorms deſcend. Roar ſtreams and windows flap, and green winged meteors fly; riſe the pale moon from behind her hills, or incloſe her head in

ſearched for the wound of his ſon, and found it in his breaſt. Joy roſe in the face of the aged. He came and ſpoke to Oſſian.

KING of ſpears! he ſaid, my ſon has not fallen without his fame. The young warrior did not fly; but met death, as he went forward in his ſtrength. Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is heard! The feeble will not behold them in the hall; or ſmile at their trembling hands. Their memory ſhall be honoured in the ſong; the young tear of the virgin falls. But the aged wither away, by degrees, and the fame of their youth begins to be forgot. They fall in ſecret; the ſigh of their

clouds; night is alike to me, blue, ſtormy, or gloomy the ſky. Night flies before the beam, when it is poured on the hill. The young day returns from his clouds, but we return no more.

Where are our chiefs of old? Where our kings of mighty name? The fields of their battles are ſilent. Scarce their moſſy tombs remain. We ſhall alſo be forgot. This lofty houſe ſhall fall. Our ſons ſhall not behold the ruins in graſs. They ſhall aſk of the aged, "Where ſtood the walls of our fathers?"

Raiſe the ſong, and ſtrike the harp; ſend round the ſhells of joy. Suſpend a hundred tapers on high. Youths and maids begin the dance. Let ſome gray bard be near me to tell the deeds of other times; of kings renowned in our land, of chiefs we behold no more. Thus let the night paſs until morning ſhall appear in our halls. Then let the bow be at hand, the dogs, the youths of the chace. We ſhall aſcend the hill with day; and awake the deer.

ſon

ſon is not heard. Joy is around their tomb; and the ſtone of their fame is placed without a tear. Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is around them!

BERRATHON:

A POEM*.

BEND thy blue courſe, O ſtream, round the narrow plain of Lutha †. Let the green woods hang over it from their mountains: and the ſun look on it at noon. The thiſtle is there

* This poem is reputed to have been compoſed by Oſſian, a little time before his death; and conſequently it is known in tradition by no other name than *Oſſian's laſt hymn.* The tranſlator has taken the liberty to call it *Berrathon*, from the epiſode concerning the re-eſtabliſhment of Larthmor king of that iſland, after he had been dethroned by his own ſon Uthal. Fingal in his voyage to Lochlin [Fing. B. III.] whither he had been invited by Starno the father of Agandecca, ſo often mentioned in Oſſian's poems, touched at Berrathon, an iſland of Scandinavia, where he was kindly entertained by Larthmor the petty king of the place, who was a vaſſal of the ſupreme kings of Lochlin. The hoſpitality of Larthmor gained him Fingal's friendſhip, which that hero manifeſted, after the impriſonment of Larthmor by his own ſon, by ſending Oſſian and Toſcar, the father of Malvina ſo often mentioned, to reſcue Larthmor, and to puniſh the unnatural behaviour of Uthal. Uthal was handſome to a proverb, and conſequently much admired by the ladies. Nina-thoma the beautiful daughter of Torthóma, a neighbouring prince, fell in love and fled with him. He proved unconſtant; for another lady, whoſe name is not mentioned, gaining his affections, he confined Nina-thoma to a deſart iſland near the coaſt

of

there on its rock, and ſhakes its beard to the wind. The flower hangs its heavy head, waving, at times, to the gale. Why doſt thou awake me, O gale, it ſeems to ſay, I am covered with the drops of heaven? The time of my fading is near, and the blaſt that ſhall ſcatter my leaves. To-morrow ſhall the traveller come, he that ſaw me in my beauty ſhall come; his eyes will ſearch the field, but they will not find me?--- So ſhall they ſearch in vain, for the voice of

of Berrathon. She was relieved by Oſſian, who, in company with Toſcar, landing on Berrathon, defeated the forces of Uthal, and killed him in a ſingle combat. Nina-thoma, whoſe love not all the bad behaviour of Uthal could eraſe, hearing of his death, died of grief. In the mean time Larthmor is reſtored, and Oſſian and Toſcar returned in triumph to Fingal.

The preſent poem opens with an elegy on the death of Malvina the daughter of Toſcar, and cloſes with preſages of the poet's death. It is almoſt altogether in a lyric meaſure, and has that melancholy air which diſtinguiſhes the remains of the works of Oſſian. If ever he compoſed any thing of a merry turn it is long ſince loſt. The ſerious and melancholy make the moſt laſting impreſſions on the human mind, and bid faireſt for being tranſmitted from generation to generation by tradition. Nor is it probable that Oſſian dealt much in chearful compoſition. Melancholy is ſo much the companion of a great genius, that it is difficult to ſeparate the idea of levity from chearfulneſs, which is ſometimes the mark of an amiable diſpoſition, but never the characteriſtic of elevated parts.

† Lutha, *ſwift ſtream*. It is impoſſible, at this diſtance of time, to aſcertain where the ſcene here deſcribed lies. Tradition is ſilent on that head, and there is nothing in the poem from which a conjecture can be drawn.

Cona, after it has failed in the field. The hunter ſhall come forth in the morning, and the voice of my harp ſhall not be heard. "Where "is the ſon of car-borne Fingal?" The tear will be on his cheek.

THEN come thou, O Malvina *, with all thy muſic, come; lay Oſſian in the plain of Lutha: let his tomb riſe in the lovely field.---Malvina! where art thou, with thy ſongs: with the ſoft ſound of thy ſteps?---Son † of Alpin art thou near? where is the daughter of Toſcar?

I PASSED, O ſon of Fingal, by Tar-lutha's moſſy walls. The ſmoke of the hall was ceaſed: ſilence was among the trees of the hill. The voice of the chace was over. I ſaw the daughters of the bow. I aſked about Malvina, but they anſwered not. They turned their faces away: thin darkneſs covered their beauty. They were like ſtars, on a rainy hill, by night, each looking faintly through her miſt.

PLEASANT ‡ be thy reſt, O lovely beam! ſoon haſt thou ſet on our hills! The ſteps of thy

* Mal-mhina, *ſoft or lovely brow*. *Mh* in the Galic language has the ſame ſound with *v* in Engliſh.

† Tradition has not handed down the name of this ſon of Alpin. His father was one of Fingal's principal bards, and he appears himſelf to have had a poetical genius.

‡ Oſſian ſpeaks. He calls Malvina a beam of light, and continues the metaphor throughout the paragraph.

departure were ſtately, like the moon on the blue, trembling wave. But thou haſt left us in darkneſs, firſt of the maids of Lutha! We ſit, at the rock, and there is no voice; no light but the meteor of fire! Soon haſt thou ſet, Malvina, daughter of generous Toſcar!

But thou riſeſt like the beam of the eaſt, among the ſpirits of thy friends, where they ſit in their ſtormy halls, the chambers of the thunder.——A cloud hovers over Cona: its blue curling ſides are high. The winds are beneath it, with their wings; within it is the dwelling * of Fingal. There the hero ſits in darkneſs; his airy ſpear is in his hand. His ſhield half covered with clouds, is like the darkened moon; when one half ſtill remains in the wave, and the other looks ſickly on the field.

His friends ſit around the king, on miſt; and hear the ſongs of Ullin: he ſtrikes the half-viewleſs harp; and raiſes the feeble voice. The leſſer heroes, with a thouſand meteors, light the airy hall. Malvina riſes, in the midſt; a bluſh

* The deſcription of this ideal palace of Fingal is very poetical, and agreeable to the notions of thoſe times, concerning the ſtate of the deceaſed, who were ſuppoſed to purſue, after death, the pleaſures and employments of their former life. The ſituation of Oſſian's heroes, in their ſeparate ſtate, if not entirely happy, is more agreeable, than the notions of the ancient Greeks concerning their departed heroes. See Hom. Odyſſ. l. 11.

is on her cheek. She beholds the unknown faces of her fathers, and turns aſide her humid eyes.

ART thou come ſo ſoon, ſaid Fingal, daughter of generous Toſcar? Sadneſs dwells in the halls of Lutha. My aged ſon * is ſad. I hear the breeze of Cona, that was wont to lift thy heavy locks. It comes to the hall, but thou art not there; its voice is mournful among the arms of thy fathers. Go with thy ruſtling wing, O breeze! and ſigh on Malvina's tomb. It riſes yonder beneath the rock, at the blue ſtream of Lutha. The maids † are departed to their place; and thou alone, O breeze, mourneſt there.

BUT who comes from the duſky weſt, ſupported on a cloud? A ſmile is on his gray, watry face; his locks of miſt fly on the wind: he bends forward on his airy ſpear: it is thy father, Malvina! Why ſhineſt thou, ſo ſoon, on our clouds, he ſays, O lovely light of Lutha! ---But thou wert ſad, my daughter, for thy friends were paſſed away. The ſons of little

* Oſſian; who had a great friendſhip for Malvina, both on account of her love for his ſon Oſcar, and her attention to his own poems.

† That is, the young virgins who ſung the funeral elegy over her tomb.

men

men * were in the hall; and none remained of the heroes, but Oſſian king of ſpears.

And doſt thou remember Oſſian, car-borne Toſcar † ſon of Conloch? The battles of our youth were many; our ſwords went together to the field. They ſaw us coming like two falling rocks; and the ſons of the ſtranger fled. There come the warriors of Cona, they ſaid; their ſteps are in the paths of the vanquiſhed.

Draw near, ſon of Alpin, to the ſong of the aged. The actions of other times are in my ſoul: my memory beams on the days that are paſt. On the days of the mighty Toſcar, when our path was in the deep. Draw near, ſon of Alpin, to the laſt ſound ‡ of the voice of Cona.

The king of Morven commanded, and I raiſed my ſails to the wind. Toſcar chief of

* Oſſian, by way of diſreſpect, calls thoſe, who ſucceeded the heroes whoſe actions he celebrates, *the ſons of little men.* Tradition is entirely ſilent concerning what paſſed in the north, immediately after the death of Fingal and all his heroes; but it appears from that term of ignominy juſt mentioned, that the actions of their ſucceſſors were not to be compared to thoſe of the renowned Fingalians.

† Toſcar was the ſon of that Conloch, who was alſo father to the lady, whoſe unfortunate death is related in the laſt epiſode of the ſecond book of Fingal.

‡ Oſſian ſeems to intimate by this expreſſion, that this poem was the laſt of his compoſition; ſo that there is ſome foundation for the traditional title of *the laſt hymn of Oſſian.*

Lutha

Lutha ſtood at my ſide, as I roſe on the dark-blue wave. Our courſe was to ſea-ſurrounded Berrathon *, the iſle of many ſtorms. There dwelt, with his locks of age, the ſtately ſtrength of Larthmor. Larthmor who ſpread the feaſt of ſhells to Comhal's mighty ſon, when he went to Starno's halls, in the days of Agandecca. But when the chief was old, the pride of his ſon aroſe, the pride of fair-haired Uthal, the love of a thouſand maids. He bound the aged Larthmor, and dwelt in his ſounding halls.

LONG pined the king in his cave, beſide his rolling ſea. Morning did not come to his dwelling; nor the burning oak by night. But the wind of ocean was there, and the parting beam of the moon. The red ſtar looked on the king, when it trembled on the weſtern wave. Snitho came to Selma's hall: Snitho companion of Larthmor's youth. He told of the king of Berrathon: the wrath of Fingal roſe. Thrice he aſſumed the ſpear, reſolved to ſtretch his hand to Uthal. But the memory † of his ac-

* Barrathón, *a promontory in the midſt of waves.* The poet gives it the epithet of ſea-ſurrounded, to prevent its being taken for a peninſula in the literal ſenſe.

† The meaning of the poet is, that Fingal remembered his own great actions, and conſequently would not ſully them by engaging in a petty war againſt Uthal, who was ſo far his inferior in valour and power.

tions

tions roſe before the king, and he ſent his ſon and Toſcar. Our joy was great on the rolling ſea; and we often half unſheathed our ſwords *. For never before had we fought alone, in the battles of the ſpear. Night came down on the ocean; the winds departed on their wings. Cold and pale is the moon. The red ſtars lift their heads. Our courſe is ſlow along the coaſt of Berrathon; the white waves tumble on the rocks.

WHAT voice is that, ſaid Toſcar, which comes between the ſounds of the waves? It is ſoft but mournful, like the voice of departed bards. But I behold the maid †, ſhe ſits on the rock alone. Her head bends on her arm of ſnow: her dark hair is in the wind. Hear, ſon of Fingal, her ſong, it is ſmooth as the gliding waters of Lavath.---We came to the ſilent bay, and heard the maid of night.

* The impatience of young warriors, going on their firſt expedition, is well marked by their half-drawing their ſwords. The modeſty of Oſſian, in his narration of a ſtory which does him ſo much honour, is remarkable; and his humanity to Nina-thoma would grace a hero of our own poliſhed age. Though Oſſian paſſes over his own actions in ſilence, or ſlightly mentions them; tradition has done ample juſtice to his martial fame, and perhaps has exaggerated the actions of the poet beyond the bounds of credibility.

† Nina-thoma the daugher of Torthóma, who had been confined to a deſart iſland by her lover Uthal.

How

How long will ye roll around me, blue-tumbling waters of ocean? My dwelling was not always in caves, nor beneath the whiſtling tree. The feaſt was ſpread in Torthóma's hall; my father delighted in my voice. The youths beheld me in the ſteps of my lovelineſs, and they bleſſed the dark-haired Nina-thoma. It was then thou didſt come, O Uthal! like the ſun of heaven. The ſouls of the virgins are thine, ſon of generous Larthmor! But why doſt thou leave me alone in the midſt of roaring waters. Was my ſoul dark with thy death? Did my white hand lift the ſword? Why then haſt thou left me alone, king of high Finthormo! *

The tear ſtarted from my eye, when I heard the voice of the maid. I ſtood before her in my arms, and ſpoke the words of peace.—— Lovely dweller of the cave, what ſigh is in that breaſt? Shall Oſſian lift his ſword in thy preſence, the deſtruction of thy foes?---Daughter of Torthóma, riſe, I have heard the words of thy grief. The race of Morven are around thee, who never injured the weak. Come to our dark-boſomed ſhip, thou brighter than that ſetting moon. Our courſe is to the rocky Berrathon,

* Finthormo, the palace of Uthal. The names in this epiſode are not of a Celtic original; which makes it probable that Oſſian founds his poem on a true ſtory.

to the echoing walls of Finthormo.——She came in her beauty, ſhe came with all her lovely ſteps, Silent joy brightened in her face, as when the ſhadows fly from the field of ſpring; the blue-ſtream is rolling in brightneſs, and the green buſh bends over its courſe.

THE morning roſe with its beams. We came to Rothma's bay. A boar ruſhed from the wood; my ſpear pierced his ſide. I rejoiced over the blood *, and foreſaw my growing fame. ——But now the ſound of Uthal's train came from the high Finthormo; they ſpread over the heath to the chace of the boar. Himſelf comes ſlowly on, in the pride of his ſtrength. He lifts two pointed ſpears. On his ſide is the hero's ſword. Three youths carry his poliſhed bows: the bounding of five dogs is before him. His warriors move on, at a diſtance, admiring the ſteps of the king. Stately was the ſon of Larthmor! but his ſoul was dark. Dark as the troubled face of the moon, when it foretels the ſtorms.

WE roſe on the heath before the king; he ſtopt in the midſt of his courſe. His warriors

* Oſſian thought that his killing the boar, on his firſt landing in Berrathon, was a good omen of his future ſucceſs in that iſland. The preſent highlanders look, with a degree of ſuperſtition, upon the ſucceſs of their firſt action, after they have engaged in any deſperate undertaking.

gathered

gathered around, and a gray-haired bard advanced. Whence are the ſons of the ſtrangers? begun the bard. The children of the unhappy come to Berrathon; to the ſword of car-borne Uthal. He ſpreads no feaſt in his hall: the blood of ſtrangers is on his ſtreams. If from Selma's walls ye come, from the moſſy walls of Fingal, chuſe three youths to go to your king to tell of the fall of his people. Perhaps the hero may come and pour his blood on Uthal's ſword; ſo ſhall the fame of Finthormo ariſe, like the growing tree of the vale.

NEVER will it riſe, O bard, I ſaid in the pride of my wrath. He would ſhrink in the preſence of Fingal, whoſe eyes are the flames of death. The ſon of Comhal comes, and the kings vaniſh in his preſence; they are rolled together, like miſt, by the breath of his rage. Shall three tell to Fingal, that his people fell? Yes!---they may tell it, bard! but his people ſhall fall with fame.

I STOOD in the darkneſs of my ſtrength; Toſcar drew his ſword at my ſide. The foe came on like a ſtream: the mingled ſound of death aroſe. Man took man, ſhield met ſhield; ſteel mixed its beams with ſteel.---Darts hiſs through air; ſpears ring on mails; and ſwords on broken bucklers bound. As the noiſe of an aged

aged grove beneath the roaring wind, when a thouſand ghoſts break the trees by night, ſuch was the din of arms.——But Uthal fell beneath my ſword; and the ſons of Berrathon fled.---It was then I ſaw him in his beauty, and the tear hung in my eye. Thou art fallen *, young tree, I ſaid, with all thy beauty round thee. Thou art fallen on thy plains, and the field is bare. The winds come from the deſart, and there is no ſound in thy leaves! Lovely art thou in death, ſon of car-borne Larthmor.

NINA-THOMA ſat on the ſhore, and heard the ſound of battle. She turned her red eyes on Lethmal the gray-haired bard of Selma, for he had remained on the coaſt, with the daughter of Torthóma. Son of the times of old! ſhe ſaid, I hear the noiſe of death. Thy friends have met with Uthal and the chief is low! O that I had

* To mourn over the fall of their enemies was a practice univerſal among Oſſian's heroes. This is more agreeable to humanity, than the ſhameful inſulting of the dead, ſo common in Homer, and after him, ſervilely copied by all his imitators, the humane Virgil not excepted, who have been more ſucceſsful in borrowing the imperfections of that great poet, than in their imitations of his beauties. Homer, it is probable, gave the manners of the times in which he wrote, not his own ſentiments; Oſſian alſo ſeems to keep to the ſentiments of his heroes. The reverence, which the moſt barbarous highlanders have ſtill for the remains of the deceaſed, ſeems to have deſcended to them from their moſt remote anceſtors.

remained

remained on the rock, incloſed with the tumbling waves! Then would my ſoul be ſad, but his death would not reach my ear. Art thou fallen on thy heath, O ſon of high Finthormo! thou didſt leave me on a rock, but my ſoul was full of thee. Son of high Finthormo! art thou fallen on thy heath?

She roſe pale in her tears, and ſaw the bloody ſhield of Uthal; ſhe ſaw it in Oſſian's hand; her ſteps were diſtracted on the heath. She flew; ſhe found him; ſhe fell. Her ſoul came forth in a ſigh. Her hair is ſpread on his face. My burſting tears deſcend. A tomb aroſe on the unhappy; and my ſong was heard.

Reſt, hapleſs children of youth! at the noiſe of that moſſy ſtream. The virgins will ſee your tomb, at the chace, and turn away their weeping eyes. Your fame will be in the ſong; the voice of the harp will be heard in your praiſe. The daughters of Selma ſhall hear it; and your renown ſhall be in other lands.---Reſt, children of youth, at the noiſe of the moſſy ſtream.

Two days we remained on the coaſt. The heroes of Berrathon convened. We brought Larthmor to his halls; the feaſt of ſhells was ſpread.---The joy of the aged was great; he looked to the arms of his fathers; the arms

which

which he left in his hall, when the pride of Uthal arose.——We were renowned before Larthmor, and he blessed the chiefs of Morven; but he knew not that his son was low, the stately strength of Uthal. They had told, that he had retired to the woods, with the tears of grief; they had told it, but he was silent in the tomb of Rothma's heath.

On the fourth day we raised our sails to the roar of the northern wind. Larthmor came to the coast, and his bards raised the song. The joy of the king was great, he looked to Rothma's gloomy heath; he saw the tomb of his son; and the memory of Uthal rose.——Who of my heroes, he said, lies there: he seems to have been of the kings of spears? Was he renowned in my halls, before the pride of Uthal rose?

Ye are silent, ye sons of Berrathon, is the king of heroes low?---My heart melts for thee, O Uthal; though thy hand was against thy father.——O that I had remained in the cave! that my son had dwelt in Finthormo!——I might have heard the tread of his feet, when he went to the chace of the boar.---I might have heard his voice on the blast of my cave. Then would my soul be glad: but now darkness dwells in my halls.

Such were my deeds, ſon of Alpin, when the arm of my youth was ſtrong; ſuch were * the actions of Toſcar, the car-borne ſon of Conloch. But Toſcar is on his flying cloud; and I am alone at Lutha: my voice is like the laſt ſound of the wind, when it forſakes the woods. But Oſſian ſhall not be long alone, he ſees the miſt that ſhall receive his ghoſt. He beholds the miſt that ſhall form his robe, when he appears on his hills. The ſons of little men ſhall behold me, and admire the ſtature of the chiefs of old. They ſhall creep to their caves, and look to the ſky with fear; for my ſteps ſhall be in the clouds, and darkneſs ſhall roll on my ſide.

Lead, ſon of Alpin, lead the aged to his woods. The winds begin to riſe. The dark wave of the lake reſounds. Bends there not a tree from Mora with its branches bare? It bends, ſon of Alpin, in the ruſtling blaſt. My harp hangs on a blaſted branch. The ſound of its ſtrings is mournful.——Does the wind touch thee, O harp, or is it ſome paſſing ghoſt!—— It is the hand of Malvina! but bring me the harp, ſon of Alpin; another ſong ſhall riſe. My ſoul ſhall depart in the ſound; my fathers

* Oſſian ſpeaks.

ſhall

ſhall hear it in their airy hall.---Their dim faces ſhall hang, with joy, from their clouds; and their hands receive their ſon.

* The aged oak bends over the ſtream. It ſighs with all its moſs. The withered fern whiſtles near, and mixes, as it waves, with Oſſian's hair.——Strike the harp and raiſe the ſong: be near, with all your wings, ye winds. Bear the mournful ſound away to Fingal's airy hall. Bear it to Fingal's hall, that he may hear the voice of his ſon; the voice of him that praiſed the mighty.---The blaſt of the north opens thy gates, O king, and I behold thee ſitting on miſt, dimly gleaming in all thine arms. Thy form now is not the terror of the valiant: but like a watery cloud; when we ſee the ſtars behind it with their weeping eyes. Thy ſhield is like the aged moon: thy ſword a vapour half-kindled with fire. Dim and feeble is the chief, who travelled in brightneſs before.---

But thy ſteps † are on the winds of the deſart, and the ſtorms darken in thy hand. Thou takeſt

* Here begins the lyric piece, with which, tradition ſays, Oſſian concluded his poems.—It is ſet to muſic, and ſtill ſung in the north, with a great deal of wild ſimplicity, but little variety of ſound.

† This magnificent deſcription of the power of Fingal over the winds and ſtorms, and the image of his taking the ſun, and

takeſt the ſun in thy wrath, and hideſt him in thy clouds. The ſons of little men are afraid; and a thouſand ſhowers deſcend.---

But when thou comeſt forth in thy mildneſs; the gale of the morning is near thy courſe. The ſun laughs in his blue fields; and the gray ſtream winds in its valley.——The buſhes ſhake their green heads in the wind. The roes bound towards the deſart.

But there is a murmur in the heath! the ſtormy winds abate! I hear the voice of Fingal. Long has it been abſent from mine ear!—— Come, Oſſian, come away, he ſays: Fingal has received his fame. We paſſed away, like flames that had ſhone for a ſeaſon, our departure was in renown. Though the plains of our battles

hiding him in the clouds, do not correſpond with the preceding paragraph, where he is repreſented as a feeble ghoſt, and no more the TERROR OF THE VALIANT; but it agrees with the notion of the times concerning the ſouls of the deceaſed, who, it was ſuppoſed, had the command of the winds and ſtorms, but in combat were not a match for valiant men.

It was the immoderate praiſe beſtowed by the poets on their departed friends, that gave the firſt hint to ſuperſtition to deify the deceaſed heroes; and thoſe new divinities owed all their attributes to the fancy of the bard who ſung their elegies.

We do not find, that the praiſes of Fingal had this effect upon his countrymen; but that is to be imputed to the idea they had of power, which they always connected with bodily ſtrength and perſonal valour, both which were diſſolved by death.

are

are dark and ſilent; our fame is in the four gray ſtones. The voice of Oſſian has been heard; and the harp was ſtrung in Selma. --- Come Oſſian, come away, he ſays, and fly with thy fathers on clouds.

AND come I will, thou king of men! the life of Oſſian fails. I begin to vaniſh on Cona; and my ſteps are not ſeen in Selma. Beſide the ſtone of Mora I ſhall fall aſleep. The winds whiſtling in my grey hair ſhall not waken me. ——Depart on thy wings, O wind: thou canſt not diſturb the reſt of the bard. The night is long, but his eyes are heavy; depart, thou ruſtling blaſt.

BUT why art thou ſad, ſon of Fingal? Why grows the cloud of thy ſoul? The chiefs of other times are departed; they have gone without their fame. The ſons of future years ſhall paſs away; and another race ariſe. The people are like the waves of ocean: like the leaves * of woody

* The ſame thought may be found almoſt in the ſame words, in Homer, vi. 46.

Οἵη περφύλλων γενεὴ, τοιήδε καὶ ἀνδρων.
Φύλλα ταμὲν τ' ἄνεμος χαμαὶδις χέει, ἄλλα δε θ'ὕγη
Τηλεθόωσα φύει ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη.

Mr. Pope falls ſhort of his original; in particular he has omitted altogether the beautiful image of the wind ſtrewing the withered leaves on the ground.

woody Morven, they paſs away in the ruſtling blaſt, and other leaves lift their green heads.---

DID thy beauty laſt, O Ryno*? Stood the ſtrength of car-borne Oſcar? Fingal himſelf paſſed

Like leaves on trees the race of men are found,
Now green in youth, now with'ring on the ground;
Another race the following ſpring ſupplies;
They fall ſucceſſive, and ſucceſſive riſe.

POPE.

* Ryno, the ſon of Fingal, who was killed in Ireland, in the war againſt Swaran, [Fing. b. 5.] was remarkable for the beauty of his perſon, his ſwiftneſs and great exploits. Minvane, the daughter of Morni, and ſiſter to Gaul ſo often mentioned in Oſſian's compoſitions, was in love with Ryno.—Her lamentation over her lover is introduced as an epiſode in one of Oſſian's great poems. The lamentation is the only part of the poem now extant, and as it has ſome poetical merit, I have ſubjoined it to this note. The poet repreſents Minvane as ſeeing, from one of the rocks of Morven, the fleet of Fingal returning from Ireland.

SHE bluſhing ſad, from Morven's rocks, bends over the darkly-rolling ſea. She ſaw the youths in all their arms.—Where, Ryno, where art thou?

Our dark looks told that he was low!—That pale the hero flew on clouds! That in the graſs of Morven's hills, his feeble voice was heard in wind!

And is the ſon of Fingal fallen, on Ullin's moſſy plains? Strong was the arm that conquered him!—Ah me! I am alone.

Alone I will not be, ye winds! that lift my dark-brown hair. My ſighs will not long mix with your ſtream; for I muſt ſleep with Ryno.

I ſee thee not with beauty's ſteps returning from the chace.—The night is round Minvane's love; and ſilence dwells with Ryno.

paſſed away; and the halls of his fathers forgot his ſteps.——And ſhalt thou remain, aged bard! when the mighty have failed?——But my fame ſhall remain, and grow like the oak of Morven; which lifts its broad head to the ſtorm, and rejoices in the courſe of the wind.

Where are thy dogs, and where thy bow? Thy ſhield that was ſo ſtrong? Thy ſword like heaven's deſcending fire? The bloody ſpear of Ryno.

I ſee them mixed in thy ſhip; I ſee them ſtained with blood.—No arms are in thy narrow hall, O darkly-dwelling Ryno!

When will the morning come, and ſay, ariſe, thou king of ſpears! ariſe, the hunters are abroad. The hinds are near thee, Ryno!

Away, thou fair-haired morning, away! the ſlumbering king hears thee not! The hinds bound over his narrow tomb; for death dwells round young Ryno.

But I will tread ſoftly, my king! and ſteal to the bed of thy repoſe. Minvane will lie in ſilence, near her ſlumbering Ryno.

The maids ſhall ſeek me; but they ſhall not find me: they ſhall follow my departure with ſongs. But I will not hear you, O maids: I ſleep with fair-haired Ryno.

FINIS.

Advertiſement.

SINCE the printing of the ſecond Edition, Doctor Warner publiſhed a pamphlet, entitled, *Remarks on the Hiſtory of Fingal and other Poems of Oſſian.* The Doctor, it appears, is compiling a general hiſtory of Ireland, and is of opinion that Oſſian, and the heroes he celebrates, were natives of that country. As he has advanced no argument to ſupport ſo ſingular an opinion, I ſhould have paſſed over his pamphlet in ſilence, had he not too precipitately accuſed me of a falſe quotation from O'Flaherty. I had ſaid, in a note, on one of the leſſer poems of Oſſian, that *Fingal is celebrated by the Iriſh hiſtorians, for his wiſdom in making laws, his poetical genius, and his foreknowledge of events, and that O'Flaherty goes ſo far as to ſay, that Fingal's laws were extant, when he (O'Flaherty) wrote his Ogygia.* The Doctor denies that there is any ſuch thing in O'Flaherty; and modeſtly quotes a paſſage from the ſame Author, which he ſuppoſes, I have miſrepreſented. I ſhall here give the whole paragraph, and the world will judge whether the Doctor has not been too haſty in his aſſertions. *Finnius ex Mornîâ filia Thaddæi, filius Cuballi, juriſprudentia, ſuper quâ ſcripta ejus hactenus extant, carminibus patriis, & ut quidam ferunt prophetiis celeberrimus, qui ob egregia ſua, & militiæ ſuæ, facinora uberrimam vulgo, & poetis comminiſcendi materiem relinquens, a nulla ætate reticebitur.* Ogyg. p. 338.

As the Doctor founds his claim of Oſſian and his heroes, on the authority of ſome obſcure paſſages in Keating and O'Flaherty, what he ſays on the ſubject ſtands ſelf-confuted. Theſe writers neither meet with, nor deſerve credit. Credulous and partial, they have altogether diſgraced the antiquities they meant to eſtabliſh. Without producing records, or even following the ancient traditions of their country, they formed an ideal ſyſtem of antiquity, from legends

legends of modern invention. Sir James Ware, who was indefatigable in his reſearches, after the monuments of the Iriſh hiſtory, and had collected all the real, and pretendedly ancient manuſcripts, concerning the antiquity of his nation, rejects as mere fiction and romance, all that is ſaid concerning the times before Saint Patrick, and the reign of Leogaire, in the fifth century. I ſhall tranſcribe the paſſage, for the benefit of thoſe who are compiling the hiſtory of Ireland from the *earlieſt ages*, and at the ſame time, caution them, not to look upon the antiquities of that country, through the falſe mediums of Keating and O'Flaherty, *Per exiguam ſupereſſe notitiam rerum in Hybernia geſtarum ante exortam ibi evangelii auroram liquido conſtat. Neque me latet a viris nonnullis doctis plæraque quæ de antiquoribus illis temporibus ante S. Patricii in Hyberniam adventum traduntur, tanquam figmenta eſſe exploſa. Notandum quidem deſcriptiones fere omnium quæ de illis temporibus (antiquioribus dico) extant, opera eſſe poſteriorum ſeculorum.*

Waræus de antiq. Præf. p. 1.

I muſt obſerve that the Doctor's claiming Oſſian's poems (p. 8) *in forma pauperis*, not only invalidates his cauſe, but is alſo no very genteel compliment to the Iriſh nation. I am far from being of his opinion, that that nation can produce no monument of genius, but the works of Oſſian, ſhould theſe be tacitly ceded to them. On the contrary, I am convinced that Ireland has produced men of great and diſtinguiſhed abilities, which, notwithſtanding the Doctor's preſent opinion, I hope, will appear from his own hiſtory, even though he, confeſſedly, does not underſtand the language, or ancient records of that country.

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